

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Petition of	DOCKET TR-250043
NORTHWEST RAILWAY MUSEUM,	ORDER 01
Petitioner,	GRANTING PETITION TO MODIFY WARNING DEVICES AT A PUBLIC HIGHWAY-RAIL GRADE CROSSING AT NORTH BEND WAY, NORTH BEND
KING COUNTY, CITY OF NORTH BEND,	
Respondents.	USDOT: 092036K

BACKGROUND

- 1 On January 23, 2025, the Northwest Railway Museum (Museum or Petitioner) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) a petition (Petition) seeking approval to modify warning devices at a railroad-highway grade crossing located at North Bend Way in King County, identified as USDOT 092036K.
- 2 Respondents King County and the City of North Bend consented to entry of a Commission order without hearing.
- 3 North Bend Way is a four-lane roadway with a posted vehicle speed limit of 50 miles per hour that crosses the Museum’s single mainline track. The average annual daily traffic at this location is estimated at 4,600 vehicles. North Bend Way is part of an established truck route with approximately one percent daily commercial vehicle traffic and is part of an established school bus route with thirty-three buses using the crossing on school days. No freight trains operate over this line. Two passenger trains operate over this crossing daily at up to 20 miles per hour.
- 4 According to the Petition, vehicle traffic is expected to increase with the construction of North Bend’s South Fork Bypass route. Average daily passenger train traffic will increase to six trains per day and train speed will increase to twenty-five miles per hour.
- 5 Warning devices at the North Bend Way crossing consist of advance warning signs, pavement markings, reflectorized crossbucks, Emergency Notification System signs, mast and cantilever-mounted flashing warning lights, and gates.

- 6 According to its Petition, the Museum proposes to replace the asphalt crossing surface with concrete panels and widen the crossing from 212 feet to 284 feet to accommodate a shared use pathway crossing at 90 degrees on the north side. The Museum also proposes to install mast-mounted flashing LED warning lights, R15-8 “Look” signs, crossbucks, and tactile warning surfaces on the approaches to the shared use pathway crossing. The Museum plans to upgrade train detection to constant warning time and replace the crossing relays, data recorder, and backup batteries that have reached end-of-life. These improvements are funded by the United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Railway-Highway Crossings (Section 130) program.
- 7 According to the Petition, the Museum and the Respondents have reached an agreement related to the apportionment of costs for the proposed upgrades.
- 8 Commission staff (Staff) has investigated the Petition and recommends that it be granted subject to the following conditions: (1) the modifications must conform to those described in and attached to the Petition, (2) traffic control devices must comply with all applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, (3) the Museum must complete the proposed modifications within five years, and (4) the Museum must notify the Commission within 60 days upon completion of the modifications authorized herein. Acceptance of the changes is subject to inspection by Staff, who will verify that the crossing is in full compliance with the conditions specified herein.

DISCUSSION

- 9 Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 81.53.261 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to modifying a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington. We find that the proposed modifications will improve overall safety for drivers. When the Commission directs the installation of warning devices, it will apportion installation and maintenance costs in accordance with the applicable statutes.¹ RCW 81.53.261 provides that the parties may enter into an agreement providing for the installation of signals or other warning devices or for the apportionment of the cost of installation and maintenance. The parties to this Petition confirmed that they have reached an agreement related to cost apportionment. Accordingly, the Commission grants the Petition subject to the conditions that Staff recommends.

¹ See RCW 81.53.261–.295.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 10 (1) The Commission is an agency of the state of Washington having jurisdiction over public railroad-highway grade crossings within the state of Washington.
- 11 (2) The North Bend Way crossing, identified as USDOT 092036K, is a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.
- 12 (3) RCW 81.53.261 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to modifying a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington. See also Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 480-62-150.
- 13 (4) Staff investigated the Petition and recommends that it be granted with the conditions set out in paragraph 8, above.
- 14 (5) After examining the Petition filed by the Northwest Railway Museum on January 23, 2025, and considering all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the Petition.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 15 The Northwest Railway Museum's Petition to modify warning devices at a railroad-highway grade crossing located at North Bend Way is granted, and the parties are directed to proceed with the modifications described in the Petition, subject to the following conditions:
- (1) The modifications must conform to those described in and attached to the Petition.
 - (2) Traffic control devices must comply with all applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
 - (3) The Northwest Railway Museum must complete the modifications within five years of the effective date of this Order.
 - (4) The Northwest Railway Museum must notify the Commission within 60 days upon completion of the modifications authorized herein.

- (5) Acceptance of the changes is subject to inspection by Staff, who will verify that the crossing is in full compliance with the conditions specified herein.

16 The Secretary of the Commission has delegated authority over this matter pursuant to Order 01 in Docket A-180762. The Secretary finds this Order to be consistent with the public interest.

DATED at Lacey, Washington, and effective February 20, 2025.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION



JEFF KILLIP

Executive Director and Secretary

NOTICE TO PARTIES: This is an order delegated to the Executive Secretary for decision. As authorized in WAC 480-07-904(3), you must file any request for Commission review of this order no later than 14 days after the date the decision is posted on the Commission's website.