

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON STATE  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Petition of ) DOCKET NO. TR-040573  
)  
THE CENTRAL PUGET SOUND ) ORDER NO. 02  
REGIONAL TRANSIT )  
AUTHORITY )  
)  
Petitioner, )  
) ORDER GRANTING EXEMPTION  
Requesting Exemption From WAC ) FROM SIDE CLEARANCE RULE  
480-60-040 ) IN WAC 480-60-040  
..... )

**BACKGROUND**

*1* On March 25, 2004, the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority (Sound Transit) filed a petition with the Commission, requesting exemption from the overhead clearance rule in WAC 480-60-040. The rule requires an overhead clearance of 22’6”, measured from the top of the rails to the lowest point of an overhead structure.

*2* The petition is related to a proposal by Sound Transit to construct a portion of the Central Link Light Rail System between Seattle and Tukwila, Washington. The system will run along an exclusive corridor in which light rail vehicles will be powered by overhead contact wires running parallel to the rail line. At the point where the light rail system would cross under South 144<sup>th</sup> Street in Tukwila (immediately adjacent to the intersection of South 144<sup>th</sup> Street and 51<sup>st</sup> Avenue South), the petitioner proposes to provide an overhead clearance of 15’8”, relative to the 144<sup>th</sup> South Street over-crossing structure. This proposed clearance is 6’10” below the general overhead clearance required by WAC 480-60-040.

*3* Because light rail lines powered by overhead wires are not explicitly exempted from WAC 480-60, the Central Link Light Rail System is generally subject to the clearance requirements set forth in WAC 480-60. The petitioner is seeking an exemption from the overhead clearance requirement in WAC 480-60-040 due to

the fact that, the subject rail line is powered by fixed overhead wires that necessarily must be located between light rail vehicles on the track and any overhead structures. Accordingly, there is no possibility of conflict between the light rail vehicles and the South 144<sup>th</sup> Street over-crossing structure. A clearance of 14''1' will be provided between the top of the rails and the overhead contact wires at the location of the South 144<sup>th</sup> Street over-crossing.

### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4 (1) The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission is an agency of the State of Washington having jurisdiction over railroad clearance requirements. Chapter 81.28.010 RCW and WAC 480-60-020.
- 5 (2) Commission Staff investigated the petition and recommended that it be granted, subject to specified conditions.
- 6 (3) This matter was brought before the Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on April 14, 2004.
- 7 (4) After examination of the petition filed by Sound Transit on March 25, 2004, and giving consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the petition.

### ORDER

#### THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 8 The petition of Sound Transit, requesting exemption from WAC 48-60-040, related to overhead clearances, is granted. Approval of the petition is subject to the following conditions:

- (1) Construction of the light rail facility under South 144<sup>th</sup> Street in Tukwila, Washington must conform to the specifications filed in this proceeding.
- (2) Upon completion of the Seattle-to-Tukwila segment of the Central Link Light Rail System, petitioner must notify the Commission.

The Commissioners, having determined that this filing complies with the requirements of Chapter 81.28.010 RCW and WAC 480-60-020, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective this 14<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2004.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary