

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

THE WASHINGTON STATE)	DOCKET NO. TR-041077
DEPARTMENT OF)	
TRANSPORTATION,)	ORDER NO. 01
)	
Petitioner,)	
)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION TO
v.)	RECONSTRUCT A RAILROAD
)	HIGHWAY GRADE CROSSING AT
THE UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD)	24 TH STREET
COMPANY,)	
)	USDOT: 396599E
Respondent.)	WUTC: 6R 156.75
.....)	

BACKGROUND

- 1 On June 14, 2004, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) filed a petition with the Commission, seeking approval to reconstruct a railroad-highway grade crossing. The crossing is located at the intersection of 24th Street and the tracks of the Union Pacific Railroad Company (UPRR), in the SW ¼ of the NW ¼ of Section 12, Township 20 N., Range 4 W., W.M., in Sumner, Washington.
- 2 Respondent has consented to an entry of an Order by the Commission without further notice or hearing.
- 3 In the vicinity of the crossing, 24th Street is classified as an arterial roadway, with one lane for each direction of traffic and a vehicle speed limit of 35 mph. The railroad-highway grade crossing is located approximately 50 feet west of a roadway intersection, where 137th Avenue intersects with the 24th Street from the north. Average daily traffic through the crossing is estimated at 4,075 vehicles, including 448 trucks and 11 school bus trips. By 2024, average daily traffic is expected to exceed 26,000 due to the construction of an interchange at 24th Street and SR-167 west of the railroad highway grade crossing.

- 4 Respondent maintains one mainline track through the crossing. Average daily train traffic is estimated at 16 freight trains. The maximum timetable speed for trains in the vicinity is 55 mph.
- 5 Warning devices at the crossing consist of shoulder-mounted flashing light signals with gates and passive devices, including a W10-5 "High Profile Grade Crossing" advance warning sign. The W10-5 sign was installed due to the steep approach grades to the crossing and a history of low clearance trucks making contact with the crossing surface.
- 6 Petitioner seeks to reconstruct 24th Street in the vicinity of the crossing to include five lanes: two westbound lanes, two eastbound lanes, and one center right/left option turn lane. The center turn lane through the crossing would be replaced by raised medians extending approximately 50 feet on either side of the UPRR tracks, thereby limiting the number of lanes across the tracks to four. The 137th Avenue/24th Street roadway intersection would be eliminated as part of the project.
- 7 In addition to the roadway lanes, the project also includes adding sidewalks on both sides of the roadway through the crossing, and a planter strip along the northern edge of 24th Street. After reconstruction, the total width of the traveled roadway will be approximately 80 feet. The crossing surface will consist of concrete panels.
- 8 The proposed improvements are related to a larger WSDOT project that involves establishing an interchange between 24th Street and SR-167 located west of the grade crossing. The reconstruction of 24th Street in the vicinity of the crossing is necessitated by the increase in traffic that is expected from construction of the interchange.
- 9 Changes to warning devices proposed at the crossing include installing new shoulder-mounted flashing light signals with gates in the southwest and

northeast quadrants of the crossing, as well as shoulder-mounted signals with gates located within the median area on both sides of the tracks. Additional pedestrian gates will also be installed in the northwest and southeast quadrants of the crossing to cover the sidewalks.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 10 (1) The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission is an agency of the State of Washington having jurisdiction over public railroad-highway grade crossings within the state of Washington. *Chapter 81.53 RCW.*
- 11 (2) The 24th Street grade crossing, identified as USDOT 396599E, is a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.
- 12 (3) RCW 81.53.060 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to any alterations in the roadway approaches to a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.
- 13 (4) Commission Staff investigated the petition and recommended that it be granted, subject to specified conditions.
- 14 (5) This matter was brought before the Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on June 23, 2004.
- 15 (6) After examination of the petition filed by the Washington State Department of Transportation on June 14, 2004, and giving consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the petition.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 16 The petition of the Washington State Department of Transportation to reconstruct a railroad-highway grade crossing at the intersection of 24th Street and the tracks of the Union Pacific Railroad Company, in Sumner, Washington, is granted, subject to the following conditions:
- (1) The reconstruction must conform to the plans filed in this proceeding.
 - (2) The crossing must be hard-surfaced between the rails, and for a distance of one foot outside each rail for the full width of the traveled roadway, including the sidewalks.
 - (3) To the extent practicable, the roadway approaches must be level with the plane created by the top of the rails.
 - (4) All traffic control devices, including signals, signs, and pavement markings must comply with applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.
 - (5) Traffic control devices and instrument housing must be located in such a manner as to provide required clearances from both the roadway and railroad tracks.
 - (6) Upon completion of the reconstruction authorized herein, petitioner must notify the Commission. Acceptance of the reconstruction is subject to inspection by Commission Staff, verifying that the crossing is in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the conditions specified herein.

The Commissioners, having determined that this filing complies with the requirements of RCW 81.53.060, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

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DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective this 23rd day of June, 2004.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary