

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

CITY OF WALLA WALLA,)	DOCKET TR-090834
)	
Petitioner.)	ORDER 01
)	
UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD and WATCO TRANSPORTATION SERVICES, INC. dba PALOUSE RIVER and COULEE CITY RAILROAD,)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION TO RECONSTRUCT A PUBLIC HIGHWAY-RAIL GRADE CROSSING AT NORTH 13 th AVENUE/STATE ROUTE 125 IN THE CITY OF WALLA WALLA
)	
Respondents.)	
)	USDOT: #808523R
.....)	

BACKGROUND

- 1 On May 26, 2009, the City of Walla Walla (City or Petitioner) filed a petition with the Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) seeking approval to reconstruct a railroad-highway grade crossing at North 13th Avenue/State Route (SR) 125 in the city of Walla Walla. The reconstruction of this crossing is part of a larger project by the city to make improvements to several blocks along North 13th Avenue and SR-125. The project involves adding a turn lane, sidewalk, and a bicycle lane to what is now a two-lane, two-way street and will include a total of four public highway-rail grade crossings within the scope of the project.
- 2 Respondents Union Pacific Railroad (UP) and WATCO Transportation Services, Inc. dba Palouse River and Coulee City Railroad (PCC) have consented to entry of an Order by the Commission without further notice or hearing. UP owns the tracks and PCC is the anticipated operator.
- 3 North 13th Avenue is currently a two-lane minor arterial with one lane in each direction. The city estimates average daily vehicle traffic over the crossing at 2,660 with approximately six percent commercial motor vehicle traffic. No school buses use this crossing. The posted legal speed limit is 30 miles per hour.
- 4 The railroad tracks are designated as an industrial spur. The crossing is not currently in use by PCC but future use is anticipated to be less than one train per day. Current speed limit for the trains is 10 miles per hour or less. No passenger trains operate on these tracks.

- 5 Railroad warning devices at the North 13th Avenue crossing consist of crossbucks only. The city proposes to install new crossbucks, Yield signs and retroreflective tape to the sign posts on both approaches to the crossing. Raised medians will be constructed on both sides of the crossing to prevent use of the new turn lane close to the crossing. This will keep sight distance obstructions to a minimum and help prevent fouling of the tracks.
- 6 The city proposes to expand the width of the crossing to accommodate a turn lane, sidewalk, and bicycle lane. The existing asphalt crossing surface will be replaced with concrete panels.
- 7 The city proposes to install an advance warning sign and pavement markings on the south side of the crossing only for northbound traffic. Southbound traffic will be warned of an approaching crossing by an advance warning sign and pavement markings on the north side of a nearby crossing.
- 8 The proposed upgrades are in the interest of improving safety and convenience for roadway users.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 9 (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.*
- 10 (2) The proposed reconstruction of a crossing involves a public railroad-highway grade crossing, as defined in RCW 81.53.010.
- 11 (3) RCW 81.53.261 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to reconstructing a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.
- 12 (4) Commission staff investigated the petition and recommends that it be granted with the conditions identified below.
- On the street approaches to the North 13th Avenue crossing, the city must install crossbucks, Yield signs and retroreflective tape to the sign posts.
 - At a clearly visible location, the city must install an emergency notification signage (I-13, I-13a or reasonable alternative) to provide emergency notification information.

- The city must install six-inch raised median curb on both sides of the crossing.
- The city must install concrete panels and flange way fillers in the concrete panels corresponding to the bicycle lane and the sidewalk.

13 (5) After examination of the petition filed by the City of Walla Walla on May 26, 2009, and giving consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the petition.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

14 The petition of the City of Walla Walla to reconstruct a railroad-highway grade crossing at North 13th Avenue and the Respondent's tracks in Walla Walla County is granted, as follows:

- (1) The modifications must conform to those described in 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) On the street approaches to the North 13th Avenue crossing, the city must install crossbucks, Yield signs and retroreflective tape to the sign posts.
- (4) At a clearly visible location, the city must install emergency notification signage (I-13, I-13a or reasonable alternative) to provide emergency notification information.
- (5) The city must install six-inch raised median curb on both sides of the crossing.
- (6) The city must install concrete panels and flange way fillers in the concrete panels corresponding to the bicycle lane and the sidewalk.
- (7) Petitioner must notify Commission Staff within 30 days upon completion of this modification project.

The Commissioners have delegated authority to the Secretary to enter this Order pursuant to RCW 80.01.030 and WAC 480-07-904((1)(b)).

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective June 4, 2009.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

DAVID W. DANNER, Executive Director and Secretary

NOTICE: This is an order delegated to the Secretary for decision. In addition to serving you a copy of the decision, the Commission will post on its Internet Web site for at least fourteen (14) days a listing of all matters delegated to the Secretary for decision. You may seek Commission review of this decision. You must file a request for Commission review of this order no later than fourteen (14) days after the date the decision is posted on the Commission's Web site. The Commission will schedule your request for review for consideration at a regularly scheduled open meeting. The Commission will notify you of the time and place of the open meeting at which the Commission will review the order.

The Commission will grant a late-filed request for review only on a showing of good cause, including a satisfactory explanation of why the person did not timely file the request. A form for late-filed requests is available on the Commission's Web site.

This notice and review process is pursuant to the provisions of RCW 80.01.030 and WAC 480-07-904(2) and (3).