

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

In the Matter of the Petition of	)	DOCKET TR-121745
	)	
WASHINGTON STATE	)	ORDER 01
DEPARTMENT OF	)	
TRANSPORTATION,	)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION TO
	)	MODIFY HIGHWAY-RAIL GRADE
Petitioner,	)	CROSSING ACTIVE WARNING
	)	DEVICES AND AUTHORIZING
	)	EXPENDITURE FROM THE GRADE
	)	CROSSING PROTECTIVE FUND
	)	
Seeking Approval to Upgrade Signals	)	USDOT NO: 058580G
at a Railroad-Highway Grade Crossing	)	
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**BACKGROUND**

- 1 On October 31, 2012, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT or Petitioner) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission), a petition seeking approval to modify active warning devices at a railroad-highway grade crossing. The crossing is identified as USDOT Number 058580G and is located at the intersection of State Route 27 (SR-27) and First Street in the City of Oakesdale in Whitman County. The Petitioner further requested the Commission authorize an expenditure of \$20,000 from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund (GCPF) to pay for a portion of the upgrades.
- 2 Railroad warning devices at the SR-27/First Street crossing consist of shoulder-mounted 12-inch flashing lights, cross bucks, a warning bell, and constant warning train detection. The Petitioner proposes to install two shoulder-mounted LED flashing lights and gates, replace the relay case with a bungalow and replace all underground signal cable. These upgrades will improve the overall safety at the crossing because motorists and pedestrians can rely on these active warning devices to determine if a train is approaching the crossing. The LED flashing lights will provide greater visibility for the motoring public and the gates will provide a barrier between vehicle and train traffic.
- 3 SR-27/First Street is a two-lane roadway with a posted speed limit of 25 miles per hour. Average annual daily traffic across the crossing is 1,100 vehicles which includes 32 percent commercial motor vehicles. SR-27/First Street is an established school bus route, with 16 school buses traveling over the crossing each day. SR-27/First Street is also a T-3

Freight Corridor, with 300,000 to four million tons of freight hauled by truck per year on this roadway. Two freight trains per day operate at 25 miles per hour over the crossing. No passenger trains operate over the crossing.

- 4 The Petitioner is requesting a disbursement of \$20,000 to pay for a portion of the upgrades. Commission Staff is facilitating the use of surplus equipment, specifically the shoulder mounted signal masts with LED lights and gates. The total approximate cost of the project is \$58,206.15. The Petitioner is contributing the remainder of the cost, including labor, for installation of the upgrades. An expenditure of \$20,000 from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund is available to help fund the improvements.

#### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5 (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, and authority to approve and administer disbursements from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund. *RCW 81.53; RCW 81.53.271; RCW 81.53.281.*
- 6 (2) The grade crossing at SR-27/First Street, identified as USDOT Number 058580G, is a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.
- 7 (3) RCW 81.53.261 requires the Commission grant approval prior to any changes to public railroad-highway grade crossings within the state of Washington. *See also WAC 480-62-150.*
- 8 (4) RCW 81.53.271 allows the Commission to disburse up to \$20,000 from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund to pay for the installation of a grade crossing protective device, without requiring the Petitioner to share the cost.
- 9 (5) Commission Staff investigated the petition and recommended that it be granted, subject to specified conditions.
- 10 (6) After reviewing WSDOT's petition filed on October 31, 2012, and giving due consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the petition and request for disbursement of funds.

**ORDER**

**THE COMMISSION ORDERS:**

11 WSDOT's petition to upgrade warning devices at a railroad-highway grade crossing, located at SR-27/First Street, is granted. The cost of this upgrade shall be paid from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund. Approval of the petition is subject to the following conditions:

- (1) Expenditure from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund must not exceed \$20,000.
- (2) Payment will be made upon presentation of claim for reimbursement for materials and labor, and verification by Commission Staff that the work has been satisfactorily completed.
- (3) WSDOT must sign and return the attached project agreement.
- (4) The project must be completed no later than June 30, 2013.
- (5) Traffic control devices must comply with all applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.
- (6) WSDOT must notify the Commission upon completion of the upgrades authorized in this Order. Acceptance of the upgrades is subject to inspection by Commission Staff, and verification that the crossing is in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the conditions specified in this Order.

The Commissioners, having determined this Order to be consistent with the public interest, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.



DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective November 13, 2012.

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).