

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

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|-------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| THE BURLINGTON NORTHERN |) | DOCKET NO. TR-031473 |
| SANTA FE RAILWAY |) | |
| COMPANY, |) | ORDER NO. 01 |
| |) | |
| Petitioner, |) | |
| |) | |
| v. |) | |
| |) | ORDER GRANTING PETITION TO |
| CITY OF ODESSA, |) | ESTABLISH A NEW RAILROAD- |
| |) | HIGHWAY GRADE CROSSING AT |
| Respondent. |) | ALDER STREET (SR-21) |
| |) | |

BACKGROUND

- 1 On September 15, 2003, The Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company filed a petition with the Commission, seeking approval to establish a new public railroad-highway grade crossing. If approved, the crossing would be located at the intersection of the petitioner’s tracks and Alder Street (SR-21), in the SE ¼ of the SW ¼ of Section 5, Township 21 N., Range 33 E., W.M., in Odessa, Washington.
- 2 Respondent has consented to an entry of an Order by the Commission without further notice or hearing.
- 3 The proposal to construct the Alder Street grade crossing is related to the planned re-alignment of SR-21 through the City of Odessa. From south to north, SR-21 currently runs through Odessa via Alder Street, which terminates just south of the BNSF tracks. At that point, SR-21 turns one block east, where it continues north via the Division Street grade crossing. The city’s plan is essentially to realign SR-21 so that motorists are able to continue north on SR-21 (along Alder) without having to travel one block east in order to cross the BNSF

tracks. Apart from constructing the Alder Street grade crossing, the proposal also involves closing the Division Street grade crossing. The petition to close the Division Street grade crossing is docketed as TR-031474.

- 4 After construction of the crossing, Alder Street will be classified as an arterial road with a vehicle speed limit of 25 mph. The roadway will consist of one lane for each direction of travel. In addition, a sidewalk will be constructed along the east side of Alder Street, including the portion crossing the tracks. The plans indicate that both roadway approaches to the crossing will consist of ascending grades, however, the maximum approach grade within 50 feet of the main track is 2.63%. Average daily traffic through the crossing after the realignment of SR-21 is estimated to be 1,100 vehicles, including 310 trucks and 10 school bus trips. Average daily traffic is expected to reach 2,000 by 2020.
- 5 Petitioner maintains one main-line track and three siding tracks at the location of the proposed crossing. Average daily train traffic in the vicinity includes 25 freight trains and two passenger trains traveling at maximum speeds of 60 mph and 65 mph respectively. Alder Street, as proposed, would cross the BNSF tracks at a 74-degree angle.
- 6 Petitioner proposes to install shoulder-mounted signals with gates at the crossing.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7 (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.*
- 8 (2) The proposed Alder Street (SR-21) crossing will be a public railroad-highway grade crossing, as defined in RCW 81.53.010.

- 9 (3) RCW 81.53.030 and WAC 480-62-150(1)(a) require that the Commission grant approval prior to establishing new public railroad-highway grade crossings within the State of Washington.
- 10 (4) Commission Staff investigated the petition and recommended that it be granted, subject to specified conditions.
- 11 (5) This matter was brought before the Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on October 29, 2003.
- 12 (6) After examination of the petition filed by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company on September 15, 2003, and giving consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the petition.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 13 The petition of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company for establishing a new public railroad-highway grade crossing located at the intersection of the proposed Alder Street extension and the petitioner's tracks, in Odessa, Washington, is granted, subject to the following conditions:
- (1) All construction and installations must conform to the plans filed in this proceeding.
 - (2) The crossing must be hard-surfaced between the rails and for a distance of at least one foot outside each rail for the full width of the traveled roadway, including the sidewalk.
 - (3) Traffic control devices must comply with applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.

- (4) Traffic control devices and instrument housing must be installed in such a manner as to provide required clearances for both rail and vehicular traffic.
- (5) Opening the crossing to the public is conditioned upon the successful closure of the Division Street railroad-highway grade crossing, as specified in TR-031474.
- (6) Upon completion of the construction authorized herein, petitioner must notify the Commission. Acceptance of the installations is subject to a compliance inspection by Commission Staff, verifying that the crossing is in full compliance with law, regulation, and the conditions specified herein.

The Commissioners, having determined that this filing complies with the requirements of RCW 81.53.030, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective this 29th day of October, 2003.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary