



STATE OF WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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(360) 664-1160 • TTY (360) 586-8203

March 26, 2008

Jim Dunn, Assistant Director of Public Works  
City of Washougal  
1701 C Street  
Washougal, WA 98671

**Re: TR-080250, Proposed Quiet Zone, City of Washougal**

Dear Mr. Dunn:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the city of Washougal's proposed quiet zone, as described in Docket TR-080250.

On February 4, 2008, the city of Washougal notified the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) of its intent to establish a railroad quiet zone at the following highway rail grade crossings in Washougal:

<u>Street Name</u>	<u>USDOT Number</u>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Street	090110F
6 <sup>th</sup> Street	090112U
20 <sup>th</sup> Street	090114H
24 <sup>th</sup> Street	090115P
32 <sup>nd</sup> Street	090117D

On February 29, 2008, Paul Curl and Kathy Hunter, railroad safety staff participated in an on-site quiet zone diagnostic review of these crossings in Washougal. The diagnostic team included representatives from the city of Washougal and their consultant from RCL, BNSF Railway Company (BNSF) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). The city is proposing a 24-hour, seven day per week quiet zone at these crossings.

After the meeting, Robert Albritton, consultant for the city provided the meeting attendees with meeting notes and the results of an "unofficial" FRA Quiet Zone Calculation. The calculation indicates that this corridor qualifies for a quiet zone because the Quiet Zone Risk Index (QZRI) is 43,674.74, which is less than the Risk Index with Horns. The Risk Index with Horns is 45,664.79. Attached is a copy of the unofficial Quiet Zone



Calculation and notes from the February 29, 2008, Washougal, WA Quiet Zone Diagnostic Team Review.

The unofficial calculation does not take into account the supplemental safety measures (SSM) that the city plans on installing at several crossings. The installations of the SSMs are based on recommendations from the diagnostic team and are outlined in the attached meeting notes.

As you know, UTC may comment on the quiet zone proposal, but may not approve or disapprove the proposal because states have been preempted in this area by federal rule. Based on our participation and observations at the diagnostic review, UTC staff concurs with the recommendations outlined in the meeting notes provided by Robert Albritton and provides these additional comments:

**3<sup>rd</sup> Street:** The city anticipates increased pedestrian traffic at the crossing because of the new retail stores opening on the south side of the crossing and proposed construction of a new community center just north of the crossing. It's UTC staffs understanding that the city intends to extend the sidewalks to the crossing, directing pedestrians to the inside of the gate arms which will provide for safe travel across the crossing. Prior to installing the sidewalk, the city will work with UTC and BNSF staff on final design and UTC approval. Also discussed at the diagnostic meeting was adding a fog line on the west side of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street for vehicle traffic.

**6<sup>th</sup> Street:** Repair and widen the existing sidewalks on both sides of the crossing so they wrap around the outside of the cantilevered masts. These upgrades will provide a smooth surface for pedestrian and ensure that there's adequate room for the counterweight to lower without striking pedestrians. UTC staff also recommends that traffic barriers or upright posts be installed around the cantilevered masts to protect both the posts and the pedestrians using the crossing. Install a second bell on the cantilevered mast which does not currently have one.

**20<sup>th</sup> Street:** No comments.

**24<sup>th</sup> Street:** This crossing has heavy pedestrian traffic because of the elementary school located a few blocks north of the crossing. UTC staff recommends that the city extend the existing sidewalk on the east side of the crossing. The sidewalk should wrap around the outside of the cantilevered mast and provide adequate room for the counterweight to lower without striking pedestrians. UTC staff also recommends that traffic barriers or upright posts be installed around the cantilevered masts to protect both the posts and the pedestrians using the sidewalk. Install a second bell on the cantilevered mast located on the east side of the crossing so pedestrians using the sidewalk will have a clear audible warning of the approaching train.

**32<sup>nd</sup> Street:** This crossing also has a lot of vehicle and pedestrian traffic, which is further complicated because of the two tracks at the crossing. UTC staff recommends that the city ensure that there are continuous sidewalks on both sides of the crossing. The sidewalks should wrap around the outside of the cantilevered masts and provide adequate room for the counterweights to lower without striking pedestrians. UTC staff also recommends that traffic barriers or upright posts be installed around the cantilevered masts to protect both the posts and the pedestrians using the sidewalk. Ensure that each cantilevered mast has a bell so pedestrians using the sidewalks will have a clear audible warning of the approaching train.

There are two sets of tracks located at the 32<sup>nd</sup> Street crossing, mainline and a yard/run-around. The mainline track has constant warning train detection and the yard/run-around has island only DC track circuit. FRA deferred to UTC on whether they would require constant warning on the yard/run-around track if signals were being installed at this location. UTC staff reported that they would not require constant on the yard/run-around track. See attached e-mail for additional information.

UTC acknowledges that this rail corridor in Washougal unofficially qualifies without any additional SSMs for designation as a quiet zone. However, at the diagnostic meeting UTC staff recommended and the city agreed to remedy any additional safety issues that were raised prior to implementing the quiet zone. UTC staff is available to work with the city of Washougal on addressing these additional concerns prior to implementing the quiet zone.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. Please feel free to contact Kathy Hunter at (360) 664-1257 or by e-mail at [khunter@utc.wa.gov](mailto:khunter@utc.wa.gov) if you would like additional information.

Sincerely,



Carole J. Washburn  
Executive Secretary

Attachments

Cc: John Li, BNSF  
Associate Administrator for Safety, FRA  
Christine Adams, FRA  
Alvin Richardson, Amtrak  
Ahmer Nizam, WSDOT



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Change Scenario: WASHOUGAL\_24083

Crossing	Street	Traffic	Warning Device	Pre-SSM	SSM	Risk
090110F	3RD ST.	2091	Gates	0	0	40,552.13
090112U	6TH ST.	4180	Gates	0	0	52,343.97
090114H	20TH ST.	702	Gates	12	0	26,774.83
090115P	24TH ST.	744	Gates	12	0	27,382.06
090117D	32ND ST.	9749	Gates	0	0	71,320.70

Create New Zone

Manage Existing Zones

Log Off

**Step by Step Instructions:**

\* Only Public At Grade Crossings are listed.

**Step 1:** To specify New Warning Device (For Pre-Rule Quiet Zone Only) and/or SSM, click the **MODIFY** Button

**Step 2:** Select proposed warning device or SSM. Then click the **UPDATE** button. To generate a spreadsheet of the values on this page, click on **ASM** button—This spreadsheet can then be used for ASM calculations.

**Step 3:** Repeat Step (2) until the **SELECT** button is shown at the bottom right side of this page. Note that the **SELECT** button is shown **ONLY** when the Quiet Zone Risk Index falls below the NSRT or the Risk Index with Horn.

**Step 4:** To save the scenario and continue, click the **SELECT** button

**Summary**

**Proposed Quiet Zone:** WASHOUGAL\_WA UNOFFICIAL  
**Type:** New 24-hour QZ  
**Scenario:** WASHOUGAL\_24083  
**Estimated Total Cost:** \$0.00  
**Nationwide Significant Risk Threshold:** 19047 .00  
**Risk Index with Horns:** 45664.79  
**Quiet Zone Risk Index:** 43674.74

Select

**Washougal, WA Quiet Zone Diagnostic Team Review  
Friday, February 29, 2008**

Attendees:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Will Noonan	City of Washougal
Jim Dunn	City of Washougal
John Li	BNSF Railway
Chris Adams	Federal Railroad Administration
Darryl Morrow	Federal Railroad Administration
Kathy Hunter	Washington Utilities Commission
Paul Curl	Washington Utilities Commission
Paul Robinson	BNSF Railway
Robert Albritton	Railroad Controls Limited

The purpose of the diagnostic team review was to discuss the City of Washougal's plans to create a New 24 Hour Quiet Zone.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Street 090110F**

The consensus decision for treating this crossing was the installation of channelization devices that comply with 49 CFR Parts 222 and 229 Use of Locomotive Horns at Highway-Rail Grade Crossings; Final Rule Appendix A to Part 222 – Gates With Medians or Channelization Devices. In order to comply with the rule the commercial driveway located in the southeast quadrant, 31 feet measured from the tip of the gate, will have to be relocated to a distance of 65 feet, and a 60 foot channelization device installed for the north approach. A 100 foot channelization device is to be installed on the south approach. Also, MUTCD compliant "No Train Horn" signs must be installed on both approaches to the crossing.

**6<sup>th</sup> Street 090112U**

The consensus decision for treating this crossing was the installation of channelization devices that comply with 49 CFR Parts 222 and 229 Use of Locomotive Horns at Highway-Rail Grade Crossings; Final Rule Appendix A to Part 222 – Gates With Medians or Channelization Devices. In order to comply with the rule the commercial driveway located in the southwest quadrant, 73 feet measured from the tip of the gate, will have to be closed, and a 100 foot channelization device installed for the north approach. On the south approach the commercial driveway located in the northwest quadrant, 51 feet measured from the tip of the gate, will have to be closed and a 100 foot channelization device is to be installed. Also, MUTCD compliant "No Train Horn" signs must be installed on both approaches to the crossing.

### **20<sup>th</sup> Street 090114H**

The consensus decision for treating this crossing was the installation of channelization devices that comply with 49 CFR Parts 222 and 229 Use of Locomotive Horns at Highway-Rail Grade Crossings; Final Rule Appendix A to Part 222 – Gates With Medians or Channelization Devices. This crossing is already equipped with channelization devices that extend 75 feet from the tip of the gate on each approach. In order to comply with the rule, it was decided that an additional 25 feet of channelization device would be added to each approach to meet the 100 foot minimum length. Also, MUTCD compliant “No Train Horn” signs must be installed on both approaches to the crossing.

### **24<sup>th</sup> Street 090115P**

The consensus decision for treating this crossing was the installation of channelization devices that comply with 49 CFR Parts 222 and 229 Use of Locomotive Horns at Highway-Rail Grade Crossings; Final Rule Appendix A to Part 222 – Gates With Medians or Channelization Devices. This crossing is already equipped with channelization devices that extend 60 feet from the tip of the gate on the north approach and 98 feet from the tip of the gate on the south approach. In order to comply with the rule, it was decided that an additional 40 feet of channelization device would be added to the north approach and an additional 2 feet of channelization device added to the south approach in order to meet the 100 foot minimum length. Also, MUTCD compliant “No Train Horn” signs must be installed on both approaches to the crossing.

### **32<sup>nd</sup> Street 090117D**

The consensus decision for treating this crossing was the installation of channelization devices that comply with 49 CFR Parts 222 and 229 Use of Locomotive Horns at Highway-Rail Grade Crossings; Final Rule Appendix A to Part 222 – Gates With Medians or Channelization Devices. In order to comply with the rule the commercial driveway located in the northwest quadrant, 25 feet measured from the tip of the gate, will have to be closed, and a 60 foot channelization device installed for the south approach. A 100 foot channelization device is to be installed on the north approach. Also, MUTCD compliant “No Train Horn” signs must be installed on both approaches to the crossing.

The “Yard Track” located to the north of the main line track is activated by an island only DC track circuit. The final rule requires that all crossings be activated by constant warning time circuitry where practical. Further investigation is required to determine if the “Yard Track” is going to require an upgrade to constant warning time circuitry.

## Hunter, Kathy (UTC)

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**From:** Hunter, Kathy (UTC)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 11, 2008 10:24 AM  
**To:** 'darryl.morrow@dot.gov'; ralbritton@railroadcontrols.com; jdunn@ci.washougal.wa.us; wnoonan@ci.washougal.wa.us; John.Li@BNSF.com; christine.adams@dot.gov; 'paul.robinson2@bnsf.com'  
**Cc:** Curl, Paul (UTC)  
**Subject:** RE: Washougal, WA Diagnostic Team Notes and FRA Calculator

Good morning.

This e-mail is in response to FRA's question on whether UTC would require constant warning on the yard/run-around track at 32<sup>nd</sup> Street, if this crossing was being signalized for the first time.

UTC staff would not require constant warning on the yard/run-around track based on the following information:  
--Low train volume.  
--Equipment and trains are traveling at constant, slow speeds up to 10 m.p.h. when operating on this track.  
--When maintenance equipment is utilized near the crossing, train crews are activating the signals or alternatively flagging equipment across the railroad crossing.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thanks – Kathy Hunter

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**From:** darryl.morrow@dot.gov [mailto:darryl.morrow@dot.gov]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 03, 2008 12:13 PM  
**To:** ralbritton@railroadcontrols.com; jdunn@ci.washougal.wa.us; wnoonan@ci.washougal.wa.us; John.Li@BNSF.com; christine.adams@dot.gov; Paul.robinson@bnsf.com; Hunter, Kathy (UTC)  
**Subject:** RE: Washougal, WA Diagnostic Team Notes and FRA Calculator

\* The "Yard Track" located to the north of the main line track is activated by an island only DC track circuit. The final rule requires that all crossings be activated by constant warning time circuitry where practical. Further investigation is required to determine if the "Yard Track" is going to require an upgrade to constant warning time circuitry.

49 CFR app. C section II, 5, states in part "every public crossing within the quiet zone must be equipped with active warning devices comprising both flashing lights and gates. The warning devices must be equipped with power out indicators. Constant warning time circuitry is also required unless existing conditions would prevent the proper operation of the constant warning time circuitry."

The FRA is silent on this matter. What would the state (WUTC) do if there were no signals and they were installing signals at this location? Would they require constant warning?

Darryl

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**From:** Robert Albritton [mailto:ralbritton@railroadcontrols.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 29, 2008 3:41 PM



**To:** James Dunn; wnoonan@ci.washougal.wa.us; Li, John Z; Adams, Christine <FRA>; Morrow, Darryl <FRA>; Paul.robinson@bnsf.com; Hunter, Kathy (UTC)

**Subject:** Washougal, WA Diagnostic Team Notes and FRA Calculator

All,

I have attached the field notes from today's meeting. I have also run an unofficial FRA Quiet Zone Calculation based on the information provided by the city and the BNSF. If anyone has any comments or if there is anything that I have forgotten please let me know and I will be happy to make the changes.

Kathy, can you please forward this onto Paul Curl, I don't have his email address.

Best regards,

Robert Albritton  
Director of Sales and Marketing  
Railroad Controls Limited  
7471 Benbrook Parkway  
Benbrook, TX 76126  
(817) 820-6347