



STATE OF WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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Nov. 7, 2018

Rob Brown
City Traffic Engineer, Public Works
City of Kent
230 Fourth Ave. S.
Kent, WA 98032

Sent by email and First Class mail

Re: TR-180776 – Notice of Intent to Establish a Railroad Quiet Zone on the Union Pacific Railroad Mainline in Kent

Dear Mr. Brown:

On Sept. 13, 2018, the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) received notification from the City of Kent (City) of its intent to establish a railroad quiet zone at five crossings on the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) mainline in Kent. The affected crossings include:

USDOT Crossing Number	Road Name
396575R	S. 212 th Street
396578L	S. James Street
396579T	S. Smith Street
396580M	S. Meeker Street
396581U	Willis Street/SR-516

On Nov. 14, 2017, UTC Staff (Staff) participated in an onsite quiet zone review of the Kent UPRR crossing corridor along with representatives from the City, the City's consultant, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), and UPRR.

The proposed quiet zone will be in effect 24 hours per day, seven days per week. While the notice provided did not specify length, Staff assumes that the proposed quiet zone will extend one-quarter mile on each side of the crossings, which is the minimum length required by Title

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49, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 222 – Use of Locomotive Horns at Public Highway-Rail Grade Crossings.

The City proposes to install the Supplemental Safety Measures (SSM) at several crossings to qualify for quiet zone designation, as well as other upgrades described in the enclosed table. As the information was not provided with the Notice of Intent, Staff requested and received the City's calculations of the impacts of its proposed upgrades relative to the National Quiet Zone Risk Index (QZRI). As the crossings now stand, the crossing corridor QZRI for the proposed quiet zone without train horns is 28,271.23, which exceeds the Nationwide Significant Risk Threshold. With the proposed SSMs, the City's calculations indicate that the QZRI for the corridor will be 20,164.86, which is below the significant risk threshold for the corridor.

Under current federal rules, the UTC may comment on quiet zones but it does not have the authority to approve or deny them. Staff acknowledges that, based on the City's QRZI calculations, these crossings will qualify for designation as a quiet zone with the implementation of the proposed SSM upgrades. Staff supports the proposed SSMs, as well as the other proposed improvements, as they will improve safety and reduce the possibility of motorists driving around downed crossing gates when a train is approaching.

Additional recommendations by Staff for safety improvements, as discussed at the Nov. 2017 onsite meeting, include:

- **Willis St./SR-516 (396581U)** - Staff observed vehicles queuing over the crossing while drivers were waiting for nearby traffic signal at 74th Ave. S. Staff recommends that the existing simultaneous preemption timing be evaluated for effectiveness.
- **S. Meeker St. (USDOT 396580M):**
 - Install constant warning circuitry. This is required for quiet zone crossings. Installation requires a petition to the UTC.
 - Install a R3-5R (Right-Turn Only) sign for the commercial driveway in the SW quadrant. This is shown on the design drawing but is not listed in the NOI under additional improvements.
 - Install mountable median with delineators along the centerline of S. 6th for at least 100 feet south from the stop line in the SE quadrant. This is shown on the design drawing but is not listed in the NOI under additional improvements.
- **Smith St. (USDOT 396579T)** - Add an R3-5R (Right-Turn Only) sign for the driveway in the NE quadrant. This is shown on the design drawing but is not listed in the NOI under additional improvements.
- **James St. (USDOT 396578L)** - Install a R3-5R (Right-Turn Only) sign to the driveway in the SE quadrant and the parking lot in the SW quadrant. This is shown on the design drawing but is not listed in the NOI under additional improvements.

Prior to making modifications to each of the crossings in the proposed quiet zone, the City must submit petitions to the UTC to obtain approval. Staff also recommends that the City review the FRA's publication, "Guidance on the Use of Traffic Channelization Devices at Highway-Rail Grade Crossings." The devices selected should meet all FRA requirements. When the quiet zone is implemented, "NO TRAIN HORN" signs must be added to the advance warning signs on each approach to the crossing.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. Please contact Betty Young, Transportation Planning Specialist, at (360) 664-1202 or by email at betty.young@utc.wa.gov, if you would like additional information.

Sincerely,



Mark L. Johnson
Executive Director and Secretary

Enclosure

cc: Jeffrey Stewart, Federal Railroad Administration
Federal Railroad Administration, Office of Safety, Washington DC
Peggy Ygbuhay, UPRR
Patrick Sullivan, AMTRAK
Kathy Hunter, Director of Transportation Safety, UTC

City of Kent – Proposed Quiet Zone Improvements – UPRR corridor

Road Name/ USDOT #	Proposed Improvement	Type of Improvement
Willis Street/ SR-516 (396581U)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West approach: Installation of 150 feet of mountable median curb with delineator posts. • East approach: Extend mountable median by 100 feet and install delineator posts for a total length of 120 feet. • Install “No Train Horn” signs on both approaches. • Install “Do Not Stop on Tracks” signs on both approaches. • Install “Look” signs on two non-gated pedestrian approaches. • Install dynamic envelope pavement markings on crossing surface. 	SSM
W. Meeker Street (396580M)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West approach: Install 100 feet of mountable median curb with delineator posts. • East approach: Install 30 feet of mountable median curb with delineator posts. • Install “No Train Horn” signs on east approach. • Install “No Train Horn” signs on west approach and on advance warning sign and on side streets. • Install ADA-compliant detectable warning surfaces on all four pedestrian approaches. • Install “Look” signs on four non-gated pedestrian approaches. • Narrow travel lanes to 12 feet. 	Other (non-SSM or ASM)
W. Smith Street (396579T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East approach: Install 75 feet of mountable median curb with delineator posts. • West approach: Install 100 feet of mountable median curb with delineator posts. • Install “No Train Horn” signs on both approaches on advance warning signs and on side street. • Install ADA-compliant detectable warning surfaces on all four pedestrian approaches. • Install “Look” signs on non-gated pedestrian approaches. 	Other (non-SSM or ASM)
W. James Street (396578L)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East approach: Install 40 feet of mountable curb with delineator posts connecting to existing 300-foot mountable median. Install 60 feet of delineator posts on existing mountable median for total length of 100 feet. Revise commercial driveway curb east of crossing on south side to provide 60 feet of separation from tracks. • West approach: Install 80 feet of mountable median curb with delineator posts. • Install “No Train Horn” signs on both approaches. • West of trail crossing: install additional 150 feet of mountable curb with delineator posts. • Install “Do Not Stop on Tracks” signs on the west approach. 	SSM
		Other (non-SSM or ASM)

Road Name/ USDOT #	Proposed Improvement	Type of Improvement
S. 212 th Street (085625H)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install "Look" signs on the four non-gated pedestrian approaches. • Install dynamic envelope pavement markings on crossing surface. • West approach: Install 86 feet of delineator posts on top of existing mountable median. • East approach: Extend existing mountable median island to 120 feet total length. Install 120 feet of delineator posts on top of median island. • Install "No Train Horn" signs on both approaches. • Install "Stop Here on Red" sign on east approach. • Install "Do Not Stop on Tracks" signs in the medians on the east and west approaches. • Install ADA-compliant detectable warning surfaces on all four pedestrian approaches. • Install "Look" signs on the two non-gated pedestrian approaches. • West of trail crossing: Install an additional 10 feet of delineator posts on existing mountable median. • Install dynamic envelope pavement markings on crossing surface. 	SSM Other (non-SSM or ASM)

