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STATE OF WASH.
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BEFORE THE WASHINGTON STATE
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CITY OF KENNEWICK,

Petitioner,

v.

UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD,

Respondents.

No. TR-040664

PREPARED TESTIMONY OF
JOHN DESKINS

INTRODUCTION

1. Please state your full name and job title.

John Deskins, Traffic Engineer for the City of Kennewick.

2. Please provide your education.

B.S. Civil Engineering, Oregon State University, 1990.

M.S. Civil Engineering – Transportation, Oregon State University, 1995.

3. How long have you been employed by the City of Kennewick?

19 months.

1 **4. Please describe your work duties?**

2 Provide oversight to the traffic division in the Public Works Department directing the
3 preparation of and reviews plans and specifications for all traffic control devices, roadway
4 and intersection projects, electrical equipment and materials, construction detours, and
5 highway lighting. Manage the maintenance of all the traffic control devices and the
6 electrical maintenance on City facilities; prepares traffic and safety studies; provides
7 transportation planning review and coordination activities, administers the City's traffic
8 safety, bicycle, pedestrian and transit programs; prepares and administration of the
9 division budget; responds to and coordinates with various public and private individuals,
10 agencies, officials, committees, commissions on traffic and transportation programs and
11 issues.

12
13 **5. Can you describe your role on the Center Parkway extension project?**

14 Assist Engineering staff in the determination of the appropriate layout and design
15 standards for the project to include travel lanes, bicycle lanes, and sidewalks.
16 Responsible for final striping and signing on the project.

17
18 **6. If the Crossing is granted, what would be the design speed if the tracks are**
19 **unchanged?**

20 The profile is similar to that of half of a speed hump (the type designed for traffic
21 calming, not commercial parking lots) or a standard commercial driveway entry which
22 goes over the sidewalk. Therefore, the design speed would be in the range of 15-20 mph at
23 the crossing and marked with appropriate warnings. The design speed on either side
24 would be about 30-35 mph.

1 7. ***Would the speeds be any different with and change in elevation of the track?***

2 With a change in elevation, the entire facility could be designed with a 30-35 mph design
3 speed.

4
5 8. ***What kind of hazards, if any, would exist if the current tracks/spur remains***
6 ***active?***

7 Primarily train collisions with vehicles, pedestrians, or bicycles. Vehicles that ignore the
8 warning signs and driving too fast for the conditions, may launch over the second track or
9 bottom out, depending on their speed and which direction they are going.

10
11 9. ***What is the projected traffic count for the extended Center Parkway in the***
12 ***first year, five years, ten years. Included in this analysis, please reference any***
13 ***studies provided to the City by outside consultants?***

14 I started my analysis with the SCM Design Report for the N. Center Parkway Extension
15 (see Exhibit 1 to Steve Plummer's testimony). The current traffic is 800 vehicles per day
16 (vpd) with a projection at opening of 2200 vpd. Extrapolating an annual growth rate
17 between Figures 3b and 3c in the report, I determined that there would be 2600 vpd after
18 five years and 3060 vpd ten years after opening.

19
20 10. ***Can you apply any statistical standards on traffic counts that justify the***
21 ***Center Parkway extension?***

22 Not really, except that this connection would eliminate the 1-2 mile trip required to drive
23 between Gage Boulevard and Tapteal Drive. This trip is generally made on Gage
24 Boulevard and Steptoe, or more commonly on Columbia Center Boulevard and the
25 Tapteal overpass via a shortcut through the Columbia Center Mall which is private

1 property. The Center Parkway Extension would eliminate the need for this “detour”
2 reducing congestion, exposure to crashes, and vehicle emissions. Quantifying these
3 benefits would require a more exhaustive study.
4

5 **11. To your knowledge, is the justification for the crossing based on existing and**
6 **future traffic patterns, or other reasons?**

7 The primary need is to stimulate economic growth on both sides of the tracks. The
8 difficulty in going between the two areas limits the desirability of building on available
9 sites.
10

11 **12. Can you describe how the extension of Center Parkway will impact the**
12 **current burden on Steptoe and Columbia Center Boulevard?**

13 The traffic projections predict a jump in traffic on Center Parkway of 1400 vehicles per
14 day between current traffic and projected traffic at opening. These are trips that are
15 removed from the most heavily traveled segment of Columbia Center Boulevard (and also
16 the most heavily traveled segment of roadway within City of Kennewick jurisdiction).
17 The extension will also remove traffic from Gage Boulevard and Steptoe Street which are
18 quite heavily traveled as well. As background traffic increases on the surrounding
19 roadways, and commercial development occurs in the Tapteal Drive area, it is important
20 to have this connection in order to reduce the congestion on these heavily traveled
21 roadways.
22

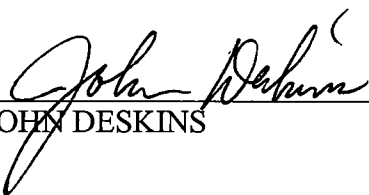
23 **13. Is there any other logical area for a crossing that could be above or below**
24 **grade that would provide relief to Columbia Center Boulevard and Steptoe?**

25 No.

DECLARATION

I, John Deskins, declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that the foregoing PREPARED TESTIMONY OF JOHN DESKINS is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

DATED this 23rd day of September, 2005.



JOHN DESKINS