

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

TACOMA RAIL MOUNTAIN  
DIVISION,

Petitioner,

PIERCE COUNTY PLANNING &  
PUBLIC WORKS,

Respondent.

DOCKET TR-180006

ORDER 01

ORDER GRANTING PETITION TO  
MODIFY THE HIGHWAY-RAIL  
GRADE CROSSING AT CANYON  
ROAD EAST IN PIERCE COUNTY

USDOT: 397135D

**BACKGROUND**

- 1 On January 2, 2018, the Tacoma Rail Mountain Division (Tacoma Rail or Petitioner) filed a petition with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) seeking approval to modify a highway-rail grade crossing at Canyon Road East in Pierce county, identified as USDOT 397135D.
- 2 Respondent Pierce County Public Works (County) consented to entry of an Order by the Commission without further notice or hearing.
- 3 Canyon Road East is a four-lane major arterial roadway with a posted speed limit of 40 miles per hour. Average annual daily traffic through the crossing is estimated at 23,400 vehicles. Canyon Road East is part of an established truck route with 11 percent commercial motor vehicle traffic. Canyon Road East is not a designated school bus route; however, 135 unoccupied school buses use the crossing daily, traveling to and from the Bethel School District bus garage just south of the crossing.
- 4 Tacoma Rail operates ten freight trains per week over this single mainline track crossing. The authorized speed limit for freight trains is 10 miles per hour. No passenger trains operate over the crossing. Railroad warning devices at the Canyon Road East crossing consist of cantilever-mounted flashing lights and advance warning signs.
- 5 The County is implementing a planned improvement project at Canyon Road East to enhance safety and relieve traffic congestion. The project includes widening the roadway to

five lanes, constructing curb, gutter, and sidewalks meeting ADA requirements, as well as adding storm drain piping and treatment facilities, street lighting, and a new traffic signal at 184<sup>th</sup> Street East. To accommodate the County's widening of Canyon Road East through the crossing, Tacoma Rail proposes to replace the existing concrete panel crossing surface with an asphalt crossing surface. The widened roadway will match the existing roadway widths north and south of the crossing. New pavement markings will also be added as part of the road widening project.

6 The proposed upgrades are in the interest of improving the overall safety for roadway users.

### 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 modification involves a public railroad-highway grade crossing, as defined in RCW 81.53.010.
- 9 (3) RCW 81.53.261 and WAC 480-62-150 require that the Commission grant approval prior to modifying a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.
- 10 (4) Commission staff investigated the petition and recommends that it be granted. All traffic control devices must comply with all applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation *2009 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.*
- 11 (5) After examination of the petition filed by Tacoma Rail on January 2, 2018, and giving consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the petition.

### ORDER

#### THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 12 The petition of Tacoma Rail to modify a railroad-highway grade crossing at Canyon Road East in Pierce county is granted, as follows:

- (1) The modifications must conform to those described in the petition.
- (2) Traffic control devices must comply with all applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation *2009 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.
- (3) Petitioner must notify Commission Staff within 30 days upon completion of this project.

The Secretary of the Commission has delegated authority over this matter pursuant to Order 01 in Docket A-151775. The Secretary finds this Order to be consistent with the public interest.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective January 11, 2018.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION



STEVEN V. KING, 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).