

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Application of

CITY OF AUBURN,

Applicant,

Requesting Disbursement from the
Grade Crossing Protective Fund

DOCKET TR-180237

ORDER 01

ORDER GRANTING REQUEST FOR
DISBURSEMENT FROM THE GRADE
CROSSING PROTECTIVE FUND

BACKGROUND

- 1 On July 27, 2017, the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) sent to various interested parties a Notice of Opportunity to Apply for Grant Monies (Notice) from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund (GCPF).
- 2 On March 21, 2018, the City of Auburn (City or the Applicant) filed with the Commission an application (Application) requesting a disbursement of \$25,200 from the GCPF to pay for a project related to installing median barriers at the C Street SW railroad crossing, identified as USDOT 085661D.
- 3 C Street SW is an urban minor arterial roadway with a vehicle speed of 40 miles per hour. Average annual daily traffic through the crossing is 14,800 vehicles, including 11 percent commercial vehicle traffic. C Street SW is part of an established transit route, with over 200 buses traveling over the crossing on a typical week day.
- 4 The C Street SW crossing is an industrial spur track that links BNSF Railway Co. (BNSF) to the Boeing Company (Boeing) facility in Auburn. Boeing owns the track through the crossing and BNSF is the operating railroad. The crossing is passively protected with advance warning signs, pavement markings and crossbucks. The crossing is currently designated as an “exempt” crossing, meaning commercial motor vehicles transporting passengers or hazardous materials are not required to stop, except when rail traffic is approaching or occupying the crossing.
- 5 Two freight trains travel over the crossing several times per week at 10 miles per hour. Because there are no active warning devices (flashing lights or gates), train crews stop and protect the crossing with fusees and lanterns before proceeding through the crossing. Since 2014, there have been multiple accidents and near-miss incidents at this crossing

due to motorists attempting to drive around the train while it is proceeding through the crossing.

6 The City seeks to install 100 feet of mountable median barriers with delineators on both approaches to the C Street SW crossing to prevent motorists from driving around trains entering or occupying the crossing. The City will be responsible for ongoing maintenance of the median barriers. BNSF and Boeing have indicated support for installation of the median barriers.

7 The City seeks \$25,200 to pay for the cost of the materials and installation of the median barriers. There currently are funds available to pay for the project.

8 Commission Staff investigated the Application based on the review criteria set out in the Commission's rules and recommends that it be granted, subject to the conditions required to administer grants, as follows:

- Expenditure from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund must not exceed \$25,200.
- The work for which the Grade Crossing Protective Fund disbursement was approved must conform to the project description specified in the application.
- The City must sign and return the attached project agreement.
- Payment will be made upon presentation of claim for reimbursement and verification by Commission Staff that the work has been satisfactorily completed.
- The project must be completed and the associated request for reimbursement from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund must be filed with the Commission no later than August 31, 2018.

DISCUSSION

9 We agree with Staff's recommendation and approve the Application subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 8, above. The project for which City seeks disbursement from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund is eligible for funding consideration under Commission rules and complies with the requirements of RCW 81.53.271, RCW 81.53.281, and WAC 480-62.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 10 (1) The Commission is an agency of the State of Washington having authority to approve and administer disbursements from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund.
- 11 (2) The project for which City seeks disbursement from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund is eligible for funding consideration under Commission rules and complies with the requirements of RCW 81.53.271, RCW 81.53.281, and WAC 480-62.
- 12 (3) Commission Staff investigated the request based on the review criteria specified in the Commission's rules and recommended that it be granted, subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 8, above.
- 13 (4) This matter came before the Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on April 12, 2018.
- 14 (5) After reviewing the City's application filed on March 21, 2018, and giving due consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the request for disbursement of funds.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 15 The City of Auburn's application for disbursement from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund for the installation of median barriers at the C Street SW crossing in Auburn, is granted, subject to the following conditions:
- (1) Expenditure from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund must not exceed \$25,200.
 - (2) The work for which the Grade Crossing Protective Fund disbursement was approved must conform to the project description specified in the application.
 - (3) The City of Auburn must sign and return the attached project agreement.
 - (4) Payment will be made upon presentation of claim for reimbursement and verification by Commission Staff that the work has been satisfactorily completed.

- (5) The project must be completed and the associated request for reimbursement from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund must be filed with the Commission no later than August 31, 2018.

The Commissioners, having determined this Order to be consistent with the public interest, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective April 12, 2018.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

STEVEN V. KING, Executive Director and Secretary