

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Petition of

PORT OF RIDGEFIELD,

Petitioner,

BNSF RAILWAY COMPANY, and  
CITY OF RIDGEFIELD,

Respondents.

DOCKET TR-200266

ORDER 01

GRANTING PETITION TO  
CONSTRUCT A GRADE  
SEPARATION (OVERCROSSING)

USDOT: 974393A

**BACKGROUND**

- 1 On March 24, 2020, the Port of Ridgefield (Port or Petitioner) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) a petition (Petition) seeking approval to construct an overcrossing at the intersection of Pioneer Street and the BNSF Railway Company (BNSF) tracks in the city of Ridgefield, identified as USDOT 974393A.
- 2 Respondents BNSF and the City of Ridgefield consented to entry of an Order by the Commission without further notice or hearing.
- 3 Pioneer Street is a two-lane roadway with a speed limit of 25 miles per hour. An average of 350 vehicles are projected to use the overcrossing daily, including 3 to 5 percent truck traffic. Pioneer Street is not part of an established school bus route.
- 4 Construction of the overcrossing is part of the Port's Pioneer Street Railroad Overpass Project, described in detail in the Petition and its attachments. According to the Petition, the multi-million-dollar project, supported by federal, state, and local funds, will provide a safer, more efficient access route from downtown Ridgefield to the Port's waterfront. In addition, construction of the overcrossing will result in the closure of two nearby at-grade crossings (Division Street, identified as USDOT 092428L, and Mill Street, identified as USDOT 092426X). Crossing closure petitions will be submitted to the Commission separately.
- 5 Because the overcrossing does not intersect the railroad tracks at grade, no railroad warning signs or signals are necessary.

6 BNSF operates 51 freight trains daily on its two-track mainline at up to 50 miles per hour  
in this area. In addition, 10 passenger trains operate daily at 65 miles per hour.

7 According to the Petition, the city of Ridgefield will be responsible for long-term  
maintenance of the overcrossing.

8 Commission staff (Staff) has investigated the Petition and recommends that it be granted  
subject to the following conditions: (1) the project must conform to the description in the  
Petition, (2) upon completion of the project authorized herein, the Port must notify the  
Commission with 60 days. Acceptance is subject to inspection by Staff, verifying that the  
under crossing is in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the conditions  
specified herein.

### **DISCUSSION**

9 RCW 81.53.060 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to establishment of a  
public overcrossing within the state of Washington. We find that the proposed  
overcrossing will improve overall safety for roadway users. Accordingly, the  
Commission grants the Petition subject to the conditions that Staff recommends.

### **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

10 (1) The Commission is an agency of the State of Washington having jurisdiction over  
public overcrossings within the state of Washington.

11 (2) The Pioneer Street overcrossing, identified as USDOT 974393A, is a public  
overcrossing within the state of Washington.

12 (3) RCW 81.53.060 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to establishing  
a public overcrossing within the state of Washington. See also WAC 480-62-150.

13 (4) Staff investigated the Petition and recommends that it be granted with the  
conditions set out in paragraph 8, above.

14 (5) After examination of the Petition filed by the Port on March 24, 2020, and giving  
consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission  
should grant the Petition.

**ORDER**

**THE COMMISSION ORDERS:**

- 15 The Port of Ridgefield's Petition to construct a public overcrossing located at the intersection of Pioneer Street and BNSF's tracks is granted. Approval of the Petition is subject to the following conditions:
- (1) The project must conform to the description in the Petition.
  - (2) Upon completion of the project authorized herein, the Port must notify the Commission within 60 days. Acceptance is subject to inspection by Staff, verifying that the undercrossing is in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the conditions specified herein.
- 16 The Secretary of the Commission has delegated authority over this matter pursuant to Order 01 in Docket A-180762. The Secretary finds this Order to be consistent with the public interest.

DATED at Lacey, Washington, and effective April 10, 2020.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

MARK L. JOHNSON  
Executive Director and Secretary