Park Road / BNSF Grade Separation

Spokane Valley, WA

Project Location

Park Road is a two lane north-south principal arterial in Spokane Valley. It crosses the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) mainline near SR 290 (Trent Avenue). Park Road carries approximately 4,070 vehicles per day. The BNSF line carries between 30 and 50 trains per day. Park Road is currently protected by standard railroad gates and signals.

Project Description

This project will reconstruct Park Road to pass over the BNSF tracks. The BNSF tracks would remain at their current location with the new mainline track added on the south side of the rail corridor. Ramps would be constructed to accommodate traffic connecting to Park Road or SR 290 (Trent Avenue) to avoid major modifications to Trent Avenue.

This project will allow the City of Spokane Valley to petition for closure of the Vista Road railroad crossing one-half mile to the east, which would further improve public safety by reducing the possibility of rail/vehicle collisions at this intersection.

This project is essential for several reasons:

- Since there is a major truck stop at Broadway Avenue and I-90, interstate trucking from Canada and Idaho traveling westbound on SR 290 and desiring to access Interstate 90 will use the new grade-separated Park Road crossing. This will help reduce congestion along the Argonne Road corridor by shifting truck traffic to Park Road.
- The project will help accommodate future growth within the Urban Growth Boundary by improving traffic flow and access to the adjacent industrial area that includes a concrete plant and aggregate products companies that are served by trucks and trains.
- Improve bike safety by including bike lanes (Park Road is a class 2 bikeway on the Spokane Regional Bike Plan).

Proposed Schedule

The Design Report, completed in December 2004, is based on guidance generated from a preliminary study done in 2001. The Design Report incorporates comments from the railroads, Washington State Department of Transportation, City of Spokane Valley, and the public. Environmental approval for the entire Bridging the Valley project was received in August 2006. Final design and construction will begin when funds are available.

Summary of Benefits

When completed, the Bridging the Valley project will separate vehicle traffic from train traffic in the 42 mile corridor between Spokane, Washington and Athol, Idaho. By removing all at-grade rail crossings, Bridging the Valley will:

- Improve public safety by reducing rail / vehicle collisions;
- Improve emergency access to residents and businesses along the corridor;
- Eliminate waiting time for vehicles at rail crossings;
- Reduce noise levels–no more train whistles near crossings;
- Improve traffic flow due to separated grade crossings; and
- Enhance development opportunities with a single rail corridor served by the region's largest railroads

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