

## DRAFT Purpose & Need Statement

The Industrial Way/Oregon Way intersection is a four-legged intersection with Industrial Way (State Route [SR] 432) as the east and west legs, Oregon Way as the north leg, and SR 433 as the south leg. SR 433 crosses the Lewis and Clark Bridge south of the intersection and terminates at US 30 in Rainier, Oregon. Additionally, there are three at-grade railroad crossings of roadways in the vicinity of the intersection (Exhibit 1): the Reynolds Lead (owned jointly by the BNSF Railway and Union Pacific Railroad) crosses Industrial Way just west of the intersection (Crossing A) and crosses Oregon Way just north of the intersection (Crossing B); and, a lead line from the Reynolds Lead crosses Industrial Way just east of the intersection (Crossing C). A rail connection between the Industrial Rail Corridor and the Reynolds Lead that would cross SR 433 (Crossing D) is expected in the future.



Exhibit 1. At-grade Railroad Crossings

### Purpose of the Project

Located in the Longview Industrial Area, the Industrial Way/Oregon Way intersection is a critical connection of SR 432 and SR 433, two Highways of Statewide Significance and part of the National Highway System, which support significant passenger and freight movement. The purpose of the Industrial Way/Oregon Way Intersection Project is to develop an affordable long-term solution that:

- Maintains or improves emergency response
- Improves travel reliability for all vehicles
- Accommodates current and future freight truck and passenger vehicle movement through the intersection and across the region and states.

### Needs for the Project

#### Growing Vehicular Demand and Congestion

The Industrial Way/Oregon Way intersection generally accommodates the existing number of vehicles using the roadway; however, the intersection experiences heavy congestion during the PM peak hours with backups that are longer than available turn lanes for most turn movements. The westbound dual left turn backups are so long that vehicles frequently use the two-way left turn lane in the median that begins at Columbia Boulevard to bypass the queues that have formed in the westbound through lanes. Traffic volumes are expected to increase 60-70 percent by 2040, which results in failing conditions where vehicle drivers experience significant backups, waiting two or more signal cycles to pass through the intersection, and an intersection that is unable to accommodate the number of vehicles traveling to and from the Lewis and Clark Bridge.

#### Reduced Reliability for Vehicles

Much of the land south of Industrial Way is zoned industrial and abuts the Columbia River, which is compatible with manufacturing and export/import operations due to the river's deep-draft navigation

channel. Approximately 70 percent of these waterfront properties have active industrial operations whereas the remaining 30 percent are expected to develop within the next 5-20 years. With projected industrial growth and development of these waterfront properties, including lands west of the intersection, an increase in train operations on the railroads in the vicinity is similarly anticipated. Currently, an average of 4 trains cross Industrial Way (Crossing A) and Oregon Way (Crossing B) per day. By 2040, 24-30 trains per day are anticipated to cross the intersection and will be unable to avoid the peak periods. Trains will routinely block the roadways for 5-11 minutes depending on train speed and length. This blockage and the time it takes to recover will substantially increase vehicle travel times compared to travel times when no trains are present. The frequency of this train activity increases the probability that freight truck and passenger vehicles will be blocked or encounter congestion. All travel through this intersection and throughout the industrial corridor and nearby roadways will be less reliable, including commuting to and from work, making freight deliveries, and providing school bus and transit service.

#### Delayed Response for Emergency Service Providers

Emergency service providers routinely travel through the Industrial Way/Oregon Way intersection. The Longview Fire Department (located 1 mile north of the intersection) travels Oregon Way to respond to fire and emergency calls in the industrial areas southwest and southeast of the intersection; ambulance service returns through the intersection to transport patients to the PeaceHealth St. John Medical Center located approximately 1 miles north of the intersection. Additionally, Columbia River Fire & Rescue frequently transports patients from Columbia County, Oregon across the Lewis and Clark Bridge (SR 433) and travels north on Oregon Way to PeaceHealth. Roadway blockages from trains will exacerbate congestion on the Lewis and Clark Bridge and increased congestion at the Industrial Way/Oregon intersection will impede and delay critical response and transport times for emergency service providers.

#### Impaired Freight Movement

The Industrial Way/Oregon Way intersection is one of Washington State's busiest freight intersections with over 20 million of annual gross truck tonnage. Trucks typically comprise over 20 percent of the traffic volume on Industrial Way (SR 432) and the intersecting SR 433, both designated as Highways of Statewide Significance by the Washington State Legislature. Freight movement by truck will become increasingly impaired as roadway traffic volumes grow in the future, overall congestion worsens, roadway blockages due to train crossings become more frequent, and travel times become less reliable. Costs and travel times associated with freight movement by truck will increase and have an adverse impact on truck-dependent business operations and viability. This adverse impact to freight truck travel reliability will be detrimental to the financial health of local industries, Port of Longview, and Pacific Northwest businesses that are dependent on truck travel through this corridor, which in turn will impact local and regional employment.

#### Decreased Safety

The Industrial Way/Oregon Way intersection serves the largest volume of vehicles and has the highest number of reported crashes on the Industrial Way (SR 432) corridor between Tennant Way and Washington Way. Seventy-seven (77) crashes were documented at the Industrial Way/Oregon Way intersection from 2007 to early 2015<sup>1</sup>, which equates to 9.4 crashes per year. Most are rear-end, sideswipe, and angle crashes. Congestion at intersections has been shown to correlate to increased vehicle crashes. As projected growth of traffic volumes occurs and the number of train crossings substantially increases over the next 20 years, drivers' risk taking and crash rates and severity may increase, resulting in an overall decrease in safety for all travel modes.

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<sup>1</sup> Crash data for 2015 is for a partial year (January through mid-March).