

South Kelso Railroad Crossing Study ^[1]

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The Washington State High Speed Railroad (HSR) program includes improvements to the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF) mainline corridor through the City of Kelso. As part of that program, South Kelso is within the limits of BNSF's proposed \$126 million Kelso-Martins Bluff Project, which includes the addition of a third railroad mainline track from the Kelso station to Longview Junction. It is a major railroad improvement with regional benefits for freight and passenger trains and is intended to increase rail capacity. In December 2011, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) approved moving the Kelso-Martins Bluff Project to the preliminary design stage. South Pacific Avenue runs parallel to the rail corridor and serves as a major north/south connection in the area that serves city and county citizens with several east/west at-grade roadway crossings over the tracks used by vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

Anticipating the increase in potential conflicts at these crossings, the City of Kelso (the City) has undertaken a study to review impacts to these transportation connections. The study includes evaluation of the current roadway crossing locations and geometry, and consideration of adjustments to the crossing locations before the HSR plans are finalized. This study summarizes the evaluation of road crossing impacts; options for grade-separation of the crossings; and recommendations to balance safety, mobility, and cost considerations for residents, commuters, and businesses.

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