

July 28, 2020

Renee Spooner
Assistant Attorney General
Counsel to the Utah Dept. of Transportation
4501 South 2700 West
Salt Lake City, UT 84119

RE: Union Pacific Railroad Crossing Improvements at 1400 North 600 West, Logan, Utah

Dear Ms. Spooner,

As the City of Logan (City), City Engineer I have been asked to address any potential issues regarding the City not being able to construct the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) crossing improvements at 1400 North 600 West as part of the current project to install a signal at this intersection. Before I address the issues associated with not being able to construct the UPRR improvements, I would like to present a brief history of this project to date:

1. An intersection Warrant Study was performed in 2003 at this intersection. The intersection met all the necessary requirements per the Warrant to install a signal at this location.
2. In 2009 the City hired a consultant to perform the design for a signalized intersection and prepare the necessary drawings, specifications and bid documents for this project. The City coordinated with UPRR during this design to install crossing arms and other required infrastructure per UPRR for this crossing. This effort also included coordinating the signal with the UPRR crossing arms. Due to higher than anticipated construction costs (largely due to improvements in the UPRR right of way) the City was unable to construct this signal at this time.
3. In 2011, the City updated its Transportation Master Plan, which then classified 1400 North as a minor arterial type road (meaning a 5-lane road).
4. In 2012-2013, UDOT reconstructed 1000 West (SR-252). This reconstruction provided a means of access for vehicles coming into Logan from the west, north and south to access 1400 North without utilizing US 89/91 through downtown Logan. 1400 North provides access to industrial, commercial, hospitals, and Utah State University from 1000 West to 1200 East.

Logan City
Docket No. 21-888-01
Exhibit 6

5. In 2016, the City hired its consultant to redo the previous design and prepare the bid documents for the construction of this signalized intersection. Again, the City coordinated with UPRR to install crossing arms, at grade pedestrian crossings, and other infrastructure required by UPRR. This also included the crossing arm and signal coordination.
6. In 2019, the City issued a Notice to Proceed to a contractor to construct these improvements at this intersection.

At the time of this letter, the contractor is nearing completion of the road improvements along 600 West and 1400 North outside of the UPRR right of way. Work on the signal installation will begin within the next 2-4 weeks. The work to be completed within the UPRR right of way needs to also start construction in this time frame to ensure that the intersection can function as designed. If the UPRR improvements are not constructed concurrently with the signal the following issues will be experienced:

1. Currently access across the UPRR right of way and tracks is controlled with a yield sign on each side of the tracks attached to a railroad crossing sign. The existing intersection at 1400 North and 600 West is an All Way Stop controlled intersection. Since the intersection is located approximately 63 feet from the east right of way line of 600 West to the center line of the tracks, there is only stacking for 2 cars between the intersection and the tracks. Without the cross arms being installed and with the proposed improvements, it is anticipated that cars will backup and stack on the railroad tracks. This potential for stacking on the tracks is a serious safety concern to both motorists and the UPRR track traffic.
2. One of the main goals of signalizing the intersection and coordinating the proposed crossing arms is that traffic will be able to flow seamlessly across the tracks and through the intersection during the allocated green signal time to east west movements. Without the improvements to the railroad, cars will still have to slow down to comply with the current yield sign before crossing the tracks. This will reduce the efficiency of the signal to move traffic and will cause driver frustration with this newly constructed signal. As is often demonstrated and documented, when drivers become frustrated, they tend to make unsafe decisions and take additional risks to themselves and other motorists.
3. Currently the asphalt pavement at the 1400 North railroad crossing is approximately 32 feet wide (asphalt width). The City will be widening the road on each side of the railroad tracks to approximately 77 feet to accommodate through lanes, left/right-hand turn lanes, and an island for the crossing arms to be constructed in. If the improvements to the railroad are not constructed with the signal the road will widen, then narrow and then widen again. The potential for vehicles to try and cross the tracks outside of the current paved crossing is a real possibility. In order to address this, the City may have to put up barriers which can be a potential safety hazard and maintenance issue.
4. With the new intersection design, the City will be providing sidewalk connectivity from Bridger Technology College and other new proposed development on the west side of 600 West along 1400 North through the intersection and to existing sidewalks

on the east side of the railroad crossing. The current design has at grade railroad crossings planned for construction for pedestrian safety when crossing the tracks. Without these being constructed pedestrians will be funneled to the tracks but will have to either travel into the paved travel lanes to cross or at a location not improved for pedestrian crossing. Without the proposed pedestrian crossings, the City is directing pedestrians to the tracks but putting them in an unsafe condition to safely cross the tracks.

5. If these safety concerns become a serious issue due to improvements not being constructed in the UPRR right of way the City may have to consider closing east west traffic across the railroad right of way at 1400 North. This would require a detour of traffic onto current City streets (many of which are residential neighborhoods) either 4 blocks to the north or 4 blocks to the south in order to accommodate an east/west crossing of the UPRR right of way. It should be noted that Logan Regional Hospital is located on 1400 North and 600 East, if the City chose to close this crossing due to safety concerns it would detour emergency vehicles from a very direct route to 1000 West (SR-252) through multiple intersections, narrower streets and through some residential neighborhoods. This detour would be close to an additional mile of travel due to this detour for emergency vehicles.

The City has gone to great lengths ensure that this intersection is designed to provide a safe and efficient intersection/railroad crossing for motorists, pedestrians and track traffic. It would be unacceptable to the public if the work in the UPRR right of way is not completed as part of the current construction project.

In addition to the previously noted safety concerns, the City is to the point in construction that if an agreement cannot be reached soon to construct the UPRR approved improvements in the railroad right of way it will begin to see delay costs from the contractor as well as added frustration from the residents of Logan as to why this intersection is not being fully completed in a timely manner.

If you have any additional questions regarding this intersection please contact me by email at bill.young@loganutah.org or by phone at 435-716-9160.

Sincerely,



Bill Young, P.E.
Logan City Engineer

cc: Holly Daines
Paul Lindhardt
Tom Dickinson
Jim Golden