



**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**  
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION  
COMMONWEALTH KEYSTONE BUILDING  
400 NORTH STREET  
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120

IN REPLY PLEASE  
REFER TO OUR FILE

July 29, 2025

A-2024-3052694

**TO ALL PARTIES OF RECORD**

Application of Pennsylvania Department of Transportation for approval to alter the public crossing (DOT 145 480 R) by the installation of temporary traffic control devices where State Route 0136 (East Main Street) crosses, at grade, two (2) tracks of CSX Transportation, Inc. located in West Newton Borough, Westmoreland County, all in accordance with the Federal Grade Crossing Program and the allocation of costs incident thereto.

To Whom It May Concern:

This matter is before us by reason of an application filed with the Commission on December 24, 2024, by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (Department) seeking Commission approval to alter the public crossing (DOT 145 480 R) where State Route 0136 (East Main Street) crosses, at grade, two (2) tracks of CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSXT) located in West Newton Borough (Borough), Westmoreland County.

A field investigation and conference was arranged by a Commission staff engineer and held on March 20, 2025, at the site of the subject crossing. Representatives of the Department, TranSystems (consultant engineer for the Department), French Engineering (consultant engineer for the Department), Colliers Engineering & Design (consultant engineer representing CSXT), Westmoreland County, West Newton Borough and Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County attended the field conference. Although notified by letter dated February 27, 2025, sent by electronic mail, there were no representatives of National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak), West Penn Power, Columbia Gas, Verizon Business, Lumen, Comcast, DQE Communications or Crown Castle in attendance.

At the field conference it was noted that State Route 0136 (East Main Street) is a bi-directional asphalt and concrete paved roadway with curb-side parking and raised curbed pedestrian sidewalks, generally oriented east and west, that crosses, at grade, two (2) tracks of CSXT, also operated on by Amtrak. The crossing is located approximately 160-feet east of the signalized intersection with Water Street (Borough roadway) and approximately 165-feet west of the signalized intersection with Second Street (Borough roadway). The railroad crossing surfaces consist of asphalt and rubber rail seal through the full width of the roadway and sidewalks.

The existing warning facilities at the crossing consist of cantilever mounted automatically operated flashing-light warning signals, separate post-mounted gate arms, Crossbuck (R15-1), "2 TRACKS" (R15-2P) and Emergency Notification System (I13-1) signs on both roadway approaches. The railroad active warning devices are interconnected with the signalized intersections adjacent to the crossings to provide railroad preemption. Both roadway approaches have Grade Crossing Advance Warning (W10-1) signs, Low Ground Clearance signs (W10-5 and W10-5P), grade crossing pavement markings and stop lines.

According to the Federal Railroad Administration's grade crossing database the public crossing is located at milepost 295.07 on CSXT's Pittsburgh Subdivision. A total of eighteen (18) CSXT freight train movements and two (2) Amtrak passenger train movements per day at a maximum timetable speed of 30 miles per hour are noted. State Route 0136 (East Main Street) was reported as having an average daily traffic volume of 7,072 vehicles and has a posted speed limit of 25 miles per hour.

At the field conference, the Department described the details of the project. The proposed alteration is in conjunction with the rehabilitation of the bridge carrying State Route 0136 (East Main Street) over the Youghiogheny River, approximately 240-feet west of the crossing, beyond the intersection with Water Street. The bridge will be closed for the duration of the rehabilitation project. The Water Street intersection will remain open, and traffic will be detoured to a temporary bridge crossing to the north of the existing bridge crossing. According to the Department's application, trucks equate to approximately seven (7) percent of the total daily traffic volume. Due to the heavy volume of trucks and the limited space for turning movements at the intersection of State Route 0136 (East Main Street) and Water Street, the Department proposes to create a new temporary traffic pattern along State Route 0136 (East Main Street) from east of the public crossing (DOT 145 480 R) to the temporary bridge crossing that would allow bi-directional traffic flow but only allow one-way traffic flow during each light phase.

To accomplish this temporary traffic pattern, the Department proposes the installation of new temporary highway traffic signals at the public crossing (DOT 145 480 R) along State Route 0136 (East Main Street), at the intersection of State Route 0136 (East Main Street) and Water Street and the intersection of Water Street and the temporary bridge structure. The intersection of State Route 0136 (East Main Street) and Water Street will be temporarily widened to accommodate truck turning movements. As a result of this temporary widening, some existing highway signal poles and hardware will be removed during construction. The temporary signal system will be interconnected with the railroad warning devices to provide railroad preemption. Upon completion of the rehabilitation of the existing bridge, the temporary highway signals will be removed, and the existing system signals and preemption patterns will be restored.

The Department agrees to furnish all materials and perform all work necessary to implement the features of the proposed temporary traffic pattern and upon completion, restore the original traffic pattern and highway traffic signal system with railroad preemption, at its sole cost and expense. The Department agrees to maintain its highway facilities at the subject public crossing and to provide for the removal of snow, ice and debris from the highway pavement.

The Department agrees to prepare and submit complete detailed traffic signal with preemption plans for the temporary traffic signals for the subject crossing to each party in interest for review and to this Commission for approval, at its sole cost and expense.

The Borough agrees to maintain the existing highway traffic signals associated with the railroad preemption, to maintain the raised pedestrian sidewalks and curbs at the subject public crossing and provide for the removal of snow, ice and debris from the sidewalks, at its sole cost and expense.

CSXT agrees to maintain its railroad facilities at the subject crossing, at its sole cost and expense.

It will not be necessary for the Commission to appropriate any property to accommodate the improvement. Relocation of non-carrier public utilities may be required to accommodate the project. Non-carrier public utilities will relocate their facilities at their initial cost and expense, if required.

The project will be funded by 100% Federal funds with an estimated project cost of \$250,000.00.

The Commission hereby establishes its jurisdictional limits at the subject crossing as the area within the confines of the railroad right-of-way and the highway right-of-way, inclusive of the footprint of any highway traffic signals or appurtenances that are part of the railroad preemption system.

Upon full consideration of the matters involved and inasmuch as no objection has been filed with the Commission and no party in attendance at the field conference objected to the proposed project as discussed, we find that a Secretarial Letter can be issued approving the application without a formal hearing.

The Commission issues this Secretarial Letter in accordance with Section 2702 of the Public Utility Code and finds that the alteration of the crossing is necessary and proper for the service, accommodation, convenience or safety of the public.

The application of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation is approved as herein directed:

1. The caption of the subject proceeding is hereby revised as shown herein.
2. The public crossing (DOT 145 480 R) where State Route 0136 (East Main Street) crosses, at grade, two (2) tracks of CSX Transportation, Inc. located in West Newton Borough, Westmoreland County, be altered as herein directed.
3. Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, at its sole cost and expense, and prior to the start of construction, prepare and submit complete detailed traffic signal with preemption plans for the subject crossing to all parties for review and to the Commission for approval.
4. Pennsylvania Department of Transportation provide at least ten (10) days' advance notice of the start of work to alter the crossing to each party involved in this proceeding.

5. CSX Transportation, Inc., at the sole cost and expense of Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, furnish all material and perform all work relating to its facilities which may be required as incidental to the performance of the proposed work and furnish any watchmen, flagmen, inspectors and/or engineering services that may be deemed necessary to protect the railroad's operations or facilities during the time the facilities are being installed.

6. Any relocation of, changes in and/or removal of any adjacent structures, equipment or facilities of any non-carrier public utility or municipal authority, which may be required as incidental to the alteration of the crossing be made by said public utility or municipal authority at its initial cost, and in such a manner as will not interfere with the alteration of the crossing; and such relocated or altered facilities thereafter be maintained by said public utility or municipal authority at its sole cost and expense.

7. Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, at its sole cost and expense, furnish all material and do all work necessary to establish and maintain any detours or traffic control that may be necessary to properly and safely accommodate vehicular, pedestrian and railroad traffic during the time the crossing is being altered.

8. Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, at its sole cost and expense, furnish all material and do all work necessary to install and maintain any necessary temporary highway traffic signals with railroad preemption, associated signage and any appurtenant equipment or controls to facilitate the temporary traffic pattern used for the duration of the rehabilitation of the adjacent highway bridge; all constructed in accordance with the approved plans and this Secretarial Letter.

9. Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, furnish all material and perform all work necessary to complete the remainder of the project, and any other ancillary features of the project, generally in accordance with the approved plans and this Secretarial Letter.

10. All parties involved herein cooperate fully with each other so that during the time the work is being performed, so that vehicular, pedestrian and railroad traffic will not be endangered or unnecessarily inconvenienced and said requirements of each of the parties will be provided for and accommodated insofar as possible.

11. Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, pay all compensation for damages, if any, due to the owners of property taken, injured or destroyed by reason of the alteration of the crossing in accordance with this Secretarial Letter.

12. All costs which are to be reimbursed by the Department of Transportation consistent with this letter shall be reimbursed pursuant to the provisions of 23 C.F.R. Parts 140 and 646. The aforesaid Federal reimbursement shall not supersede, delay or in any manner, postpone the effect of any paragraph contained in this or any related Secretarial Letter or Order.

13. Upon completion of the rehabilitation of the highway bridge adjacent to the subject public crossing, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, at its sole cost and expense, remove any temporary highway traffic signals with railroad preemption, any associated signage and any other appurtenant equipment or controls that facilitated the temporary traffic pattern and restore any disturbed, altered or removed highway traffic signals with railroad preemption, associated signage and any other appurtenant equipment as part of the project; all in accordance with the approved plans and this Secretarial Letter.

14. All work necessary to alter the crossing be completed in a manner satisfactory to this Commission on or before December 31, 2028, and that on or before said date, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation report in writing to this Commission the date of actual completion of the work.

15. CSX Transportation, Inc., at its sole cost and expense, furnish all material and do all work necessary to maintain its railroad facilities at the subject crossing, including the active warning devices and all appurtenant equipment and maintain at all times in a smooth and satisfactory condition the crossing surfaces located between the rails and for a distance of twenty-four (24) inches beyond the outermost rails, including the pavement between the adjacent tracks, all in accordance with Part 8 of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and this Secretarial Letter; and provide Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and West Newton Borough at least ten (10) business days' advance notice when performing any work as directed under this paragraph.

16. Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, at its sole cost and expense, furnish all material and do all work necessary to maintain its highway approach roadways to the subject crossing to points twenty-four (24) inches beyond each outside rail and in addition, maintain the grade crossing advance warning signs, low clearance signs, stop lines and pavement markings, all in accordance with Part 8 of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and this Secretarial Letter, and provide CSX Transportation, Inc. and West Newton Borough at least ten (10) business days' advance notice when performing any work that may affect their facilities, as directed by this paragraph.

17. Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, at its sole cost and expense, furnish all material and perform all work necessary for the removal of snow, ice and debris from the roadway pavement at the public crossing and the approaches thereto.

18. West Newton Borough, at its sole cost and expense, furnish all material and perform all work necessary to maintain the raised pedestrian sidewalks and curbs at the public crossing and the approaches thereto, and provide CSX Transportation, Inc. and Pennsylvania Department of Transportation at least ten (10) business days' advance notice when performing any work that may affect their facilities, as directed by this paragraph.

19. West Newton Borough, at its sole cost and expense, furnish all material and perform all work necessary for the removal of snow, ice and debris from the raised pedestrian sidewalks at the public crossing and the approaches thereto.

20. Upon completion of the alteration of the subject crossing, West Newton Borough, at its sole cost and expense, furnish all material and do all work necessary thereafter to maintain the highway traffic signals, preemption interconnect, preemption junction box and any other ancillary features thereof at the intersection where State Route 0136 (East Main Street) intersects with Water Street and where State Route 0136 (East Main Street) intersects with Second Street.

21. Upon completion of the alteration of the subject crossing, West Newton Borough, at its sole cost and expense, shall annually inspect the highway traffic signals, traffic signal control box, and cable from the junction box to the traffic signal control box, at the crossing to ensure that the timing and preemption operation of the signal systems are functioning as designed. West Newton Borough shall contact CSX Transportation, Inc. and arrange for railroad personnel to activate the railroad crossing warning system to accommodate the required inspection. West Newton Borough shall report any operational problems that cannot be corrected during the annual inspection to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, CSX Transportation, Inc. and the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission.

22. Upon completion of the alteration of the subject crossing, each non-carrier public utility company and municipal authority, at its sole cost and expense, furnish all material and perform all work necessary thereafter to maintain its respective facilities, existing or altered, located within the limits of the alteration.

23. This Secretarial Letter is without prejudice to the right of any party to recover all or part of any costs incurred by said party in compliance with the provisions of this Secretarial Letter, in accordance with any lawful agreement between it and any other party.

24. Upon completion of the work herein directed, and upon written request from any party of record, this proceeding be scheduled for a hearing at a time and place to be determined by the Commission, for the purpose of taking testimony upon the final allocation of any remaining costs incurred by the non-carrier utility companies and other matters relevant to this proceeding.

The Parties are reminded that failure to comply with this or any Order or Secretarial Letter in this proceeding may result in an enforcement action seeking civil penalties and/or other sanctions pursuant to 66 Pa. C.S. § 3301.


All formal documents must be filed with the Secretary of the Commission. Documents must be eFiled, mailed or hand delivered. All filings should be addressed to the Secretary, PA Public Utility Commission, 400 North Street, Harrisburg, PA 17120. The Commission will not accept documents delivered by fax or by e-mail. Parties are encouraged to file formal documents by eFiling with the Secretary of the Commission by opening an eFiling account through the Commission's website (the account is free of charge) and accepting eService at <https://www.puc.pa.gov/filing-resources/efiling/>.

If your filing contains confidential material, you are required to file by overnight delivery to ensure the timely filing of your submission. There are certain filings that cannot be eFiled, such as filings containing confidential or proprietary material. These must be submitted to the Secretary by overnight delivery, priority or certified mail to allow tracking of your filing.

If you are dissatisfied with the resolution of this matter, you may, as set forth in 52 Pa. Code §§ 1.31 and 5.44, file a Petition for Reconsideration from Staff Action (Petition) with the Commission within twenty (20) days of the date of this letter. The Petition shall be eFiled with the Secretary of the Commission or sent to: Secretary, PA Public Utility Commission, 400 North Street, Harrisburg, PA 17120, and must be filed within twenty (20) days, or if no timely request is made, the action will be deemed to be a final action of the Commission.

The Petition MUST include: (1) a written statement (divided into numbered paragraphs) outlining the reasons for the request; (2) the case docket number (it is provided for you at the top right-hand corner of this letter); (3) the party on whose behalf the petition is made; (4) a Certificate of Service on the other parties of record; and (5) a Verification with original signature in accordance with 52 Pa. Code § 1.36.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Matthew L. Homsher". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Matthew L. Homsher  
Secretary