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MEMORANDUM

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Arizona Corporation Commission
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OCT 23 2015

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To: THE COMMISSION

From: Robert Marvin
Director
Safety Division

Date: October 23, 2015

RE: IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF THE ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO INSTALL A NEW GRADE SEPARATED CROSSING AND FOR THE UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY TO REMOVE AN EXISTING AT-GRADE CROSIING AT INTERSTATE 10 AND INA ROAD IN THE TOWN OF MARANA, PIMA COUNTY, ARIZONA, USDOT NO 741-101-G.

DOCKET NO. RR-03639A-15-0200

Background

On June 17, 2015, the Arizona Department of Transportation ("ADOT") filed with the Arizona Corporation Commission ("Commission") a request for approval for ADOT to construct a new grade separated crossing and for the Union Pacific Railroad Company ("Railroad") to remove an existing at-grade crossing at Interstate 10 ("I-10") and Ina Road in the Town of Marana ("Town"), Pima County, Arizona at USDOT No. 741-101-G.

Geographical Information

Marana is in Pima County, Arizona, located northwest of Tucson, with a small portion in Pinal County. According to the 2010 census, the population of the Town is 34,961. Marana was the fourth fastest-growing area among all cities and towns in Arizona of any size from 1990 to 2000.

The rail line in this area runs in a southeast to northwest direction, parallel to I-10 and the I-10 Frontage Road. Ina Road is an east to west main arterial with an interchange at I-10. (See Appendix "A")

INA ROAD

Ina Road is a four lane roadway at the railroad crossing. Presently, the Town is the road authority with jurisdiction over the roadway at the crossing. However, ADOT will become the road authority with jurisdiction of the grade separation prior to the start of construction. Currently, the crossing is protected with flashing lights, automatic gates and bells as well as a cantilever with flashing lights.

ADOT's proposed Ina Road grade separation is part of a broader project that consists of rebuilding I-10 from just east of Ruthrauff Road to just east of Prince Road. As part of the

project, I-10 will be lowered to ground level, widened to 8 lanes and paved with concrete. Ina Road will then be elevated over I-10, the Railroad's tracks, and Camino de Oeste a Marana roadway southwest of I-10. Ina Road will be reconstructed to a six lane facility with turn lanes, bicycle lanes, and sidewalks. The final configuration will allow for the removal of the existing at-grade crossing and still allow access to the I-10. The new grade separation will be located in approximately the same place as the existing at-grade crossing. This project address' traffic congestion at the railroad crossing on Ina Road by allowing all traffic to pass over the railroad tracks.

This project is being funded by the Federal Highway Administration ("FHWA"), the City of Tucson, the Town, Pima Association of Governments ("PAG"), ADOT and the Railroad. The total cost of the entire project is estimated to be $120 million with the Ina Road grade-separation of the Railroad estimated to be $7.4 million. The Railroad's contribution to the project has not been finalized.

According to PAG's web-site, the Average Daily Traffic ("ADT") taken in 2009 was 15,100 vehicles per day ("vpd") west of I-10, and 31,700 vpd east of I-10.

The posted speed limit on Ina Road is 45 mph. Commission Rail Safety Section ("Staff") records, as well as Federal Railroad Administration ("FRA") accident/incident records indicate seven incidents at this crossing with one injury. The first incident occurred on July 9, 1976, when a car stopped on the tracks and was struck by a train. The second occurred on October 11, 1976. In this incident, a car drove around the down gates and was struck by a train. The third incident occurred on November 26, 1991, when a car stopped on the tracks and was struck by a train. The fourth incident occurred on February 15, 1997; again a car was stopped on the tracks and was struck by a train. A fifth incident occurred on November 29, 1999. A car was stopped on the tracks and was struck by a train, with one injury reported. A sixth incident occurred on February 22, 2001. In this incident, a car stopped on the tracks and was struck by a train, no injuries were reported. The most recent incident, the seventh, occurred on June 29, 2003. A car drove around the downed gates and was struck by a train, no casualties were reported. Records indicate the warning devices were reported to be working as intended in all seven incidents.

Alternative routes from this crossing are as follows: Massingale Road is an at-grade crossing .6 miles to the northwest and Orange Grove Road is an underpass, 1.3 miles to the southeast of the crossing.

Train Data

Data provided by the Railroad to ADOT regarding train movements through this crossing are as follows:

Train Count: 48 total average trains per day (46 freight, and 2 passenger trains)
Train Speed: 79 mph passenger / 70 mph freight
Thru Freight/Switching Moves: All moves through this crossing are thru freight. This crossing is used by Amtrak twice per day, three times per week.

Schools and Bus Routes

There are several schools within the Town that are near the Ina Road crossing. They are:

- ✓ John David Arnold Learning Center .7 miles from the crossing
- ✓ Thornydale Elementary School .8 miles from the crossing
- ✓ Coyote Trail Elementary School 2.8 miles from the crossing
- ✓ Richardson Elementary School 1.6 miles from the crossing

Hospitals

The nearest hospitals to the Ina Road crossing are:

- ✓ Northwest Medical Center 3.2 miles northwest of the crossing
- ✓ Tucson Heart Hospital 6.8 miles from the crossing
- ✓ St. Mary's Hospital 8.5 miles from the crossing

Hazardous Materials

ADOT gave the following response when asked about hazardous materials crossing this crossing:

It is not known how much hazardous materials traffic uses the existing crossing each day.

Zoning

Staff requested that ADOT provide information regarding the type of zoning in adjacent areas from the crossing. The following was their response:

Surrounding area is zoned for Light Industrial and Village Commercial.

Spur Lines

ADOT gave the following answer regarding spur lines located in the area:

Unknown if railroad spurs have been removed within a 10 mile radius.

Grade Separation

A study was started in the 1990's to improve the I-10 from Tangerine Road to Interstate 19 ("I-19"). This study was completed in early 2000 and included the grade separation of Ina Road from I-10 and the Railroad. ADOT will be responsible for constructing and maintaining the grade separation. ADOT is requesting that the Railroad be given a minimum of 36 months from the date of the signed Commission Order to remove the at-grade crossing signals and surface.

Crossing Closure

Ina road will be closed to the general public early in the construction of the new overpass structure. The at-grade crossing will be used by contractor traffic only until the new overpass is complete, at which time the Railroad will complete the closure of the at-grade crossing.

Staff Conclusions

Having reviewed all applicable data, Staff supports ADOT's application. Because of the high number of past incidents at the existing at-grade crossing, Staff believes the grade separation and the elimination of the at-grade crossing is in the public's interest and is reasonable. Staff believes that the measures proposed by ADOT are consistent with other similar grade-separated crossings in the State and will provide for the public's safety. Staff supports ADOT's request to allow the Railroad 36 months after a signed Commission Order, to remove the at-grade crossing. Therefore, Staff recommends approval of ADOT's application.

Brian H. Lehman
Railroad Safety Supervisor
Safety Division

Originator: BHL

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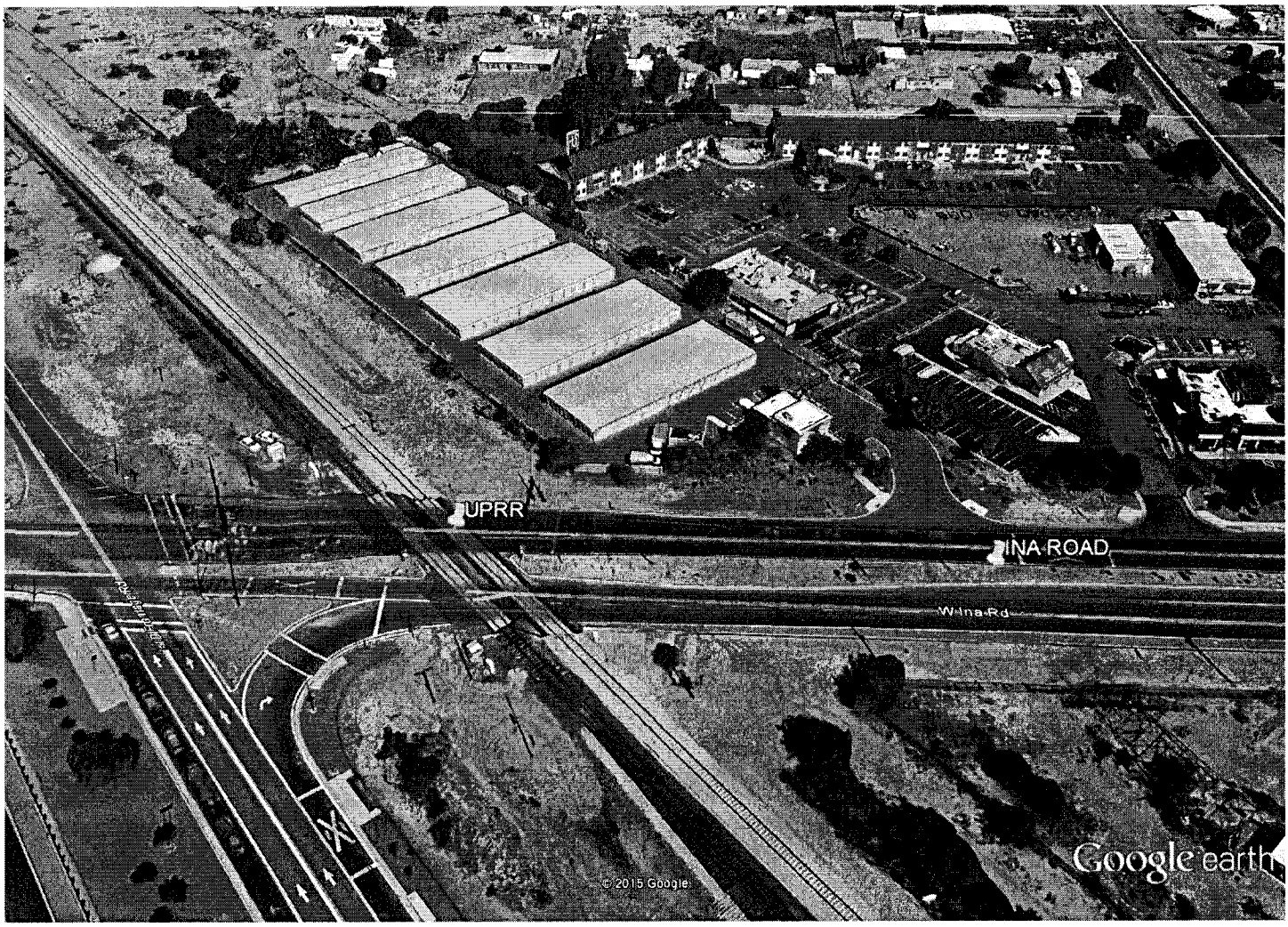

Google earth

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