Public Projects and the Railroad

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How tomorrow moves
• Generally, a Public Project is any construction or maintenance project done by any party other than the Railroad that may affect railroad property.
• For example, the construction or maintenance of:
  – At-grade crossings
  – Overhead and undergrade bridges
  – Parallel roads
  – Other types of projects that necessitate work near the Railroad
How do Public Projects impact the Railroad?

- Railroad Signal System
  - At-grade crossing warning devices
  - Pre-emption of roadway traffic signals
- Railroad Track Structure
  - At-grade crossing surfaces
  - Stormwater runoff
- Railroad Operations
  - Construction activities around active tracks
  - Vertical and horizontal clearances
- Railroad Property
  - Construction access roads
  - Stormwater maintenance structures and other utilities
How does the Railroad impact Public Projects?

- Railroad Engineering & Construction Agreements
- Plan reviews and construction inspection
- Railroad protective liability insurance
- Railroad flagging protection
- Railroad construction standards
Why does the Railroad require reimbursement?

- Flagmen are railroad employees that are taken away from their daily duties of either track maintenance or train operations. The Railroad cannot use this employee at the same time, so the Railroad passes the cost of that flagman on to the Public Project.

- The Railroad hires an engineering consultant to do plan reviews, write agreements, and help the project sponsor navigate the Public Projects process with the Railroad. The engineering consultant cost is passed on to the Public Project. But for the Public Project, the Railroad would not hire that consultant.
How does the Railroad view Public Projects?

- The Railroad is first and foremost a transportation business.
- Generally, each Railroad has staff dedicated to overseeing Public Projects with the assistance of General Engineering Consultants.
- Public Project needs must be coordinated with existing Railroad needs.
- Public Projects usually do not provide any benefit to the Railroad, but the Railroad understands that they are necessary.
- As such, coordination and early communication with the Railroad is necessary to avoid delays to Public Projects.
At-grade Crossings
- New crossings are discouraged. At-grade crossings provide a location for the public and a train to have an impact. Maintenance of crossing surface falls onto Railroad.

Grade Separations of existing at-grade crossings
- Encouraged by Railroads to eliminate at-grade crossings. Generally, the railroad will contribute to grade separation projects.

Overhead & Undergrade Highway Bridges
- Encouraged by Railroads. Must have appropriate clearance to allow all types of freight to pass below the bridge. Must not impede future expansion of railroad.
Project Types and the Railroad’s Perspective

• **Active Warning Devices**
  – Must be funded by project sponsor. Railroad takes on maintenance after initial installation.

• **Quiet Zones**
  – Must be paid by project sponsor. FRA governs quiet zones. Railroad does not promote quiet zones.

• **Recreational Paths**
  – Safety measures must be implemented. Grade separations are encouraged and in some cases required. Provides an opportunity for the public and a train to meet, which decreases public safety.
Successful Public Projects

• Early Coordination
  – Railroad Design Standards must be followed from the beginning
  – Less plan reviews
  – Saves time & money

• Agreements
  – Preliminary Engineering
  – Construction
  – Preemption

• Safety
  – Flagging
  – Construction Inspection
  – Compliance with Railroad Standards
Some types of Public Projects do benefit the Railroad. The following are some ways to receive monetary contributions from the Railroad.

- Eliminate at-grade crossings!
- Transfer of highway bridge maintenance to road authority
- Safety corridor projects
Any Questions?

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