

RESOLUTION NO. 1617

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIFE, PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON EXPRESSING THE COUNCIL'S INTENT TO EXPEDITE THE PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION OF A 54<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE EAST GRADE SEPARATED CROSSING OF THE UPRR RIGHT OF WAY AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO NEGOTIATE AN AGREEMENT WITH POTENTIAL FUNDING PARTNERS

WHEREAS, the City of Fife closed the 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue East at grade crossing of the UPRR track to all but emergency vehicles due to safety concerns related to the proximity of the crossing to the UPRR yard and the UPRR's expressed intent to add a second track that would result in increased switching of trains that would block the crossing; and

WHEREAS, since that time the number of Fife residents living on the south side of the tracks has increased exponentially, the City, in partnership with the Fife School District, has built a major park and sports complex on the north side of the tracks, the Fife School District has constructed a middle school adjacent to 54<sup>th</sup> and the UPRR on the north side of the tracks, and the Puyallup Tribe has constructed significant community improvements south of the tracks; and

WHEREAS, Fife residents, the Fife School District, the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC) staff, the UPRR and others have publicly stated their concern that an at grade crossing at this location is unsafe; and

WHEREAS, the Puyallup Tribe and others help fund the construction of a playfield at an alternative location so that the opportunity for building an underpass would not be foreclosed by the original plan of constructing the playfield across what is now the 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue right of way north of the UPRR tracks; and

WHEREAS, the Council finds that a grade separated crossing at 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue East would be the safest option for pedestrian and vehicle traffic, and could lower the emergency response time by assuring that the 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue crossing would not be blocked by trains when an emergency arises; and

WHEREAS, the City has already spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in the planning for a grade separated crossing, and has recently advertised for Requests for Qualifications for engineering firms, with the intent of authorizing the preparation of construction drawings for the 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue East UPRR grade separated crossing with the intent of awarding an engineering contract by the end of 2014, so that, if funding becomes available, construction on the grade separated crossing can commence in 2015; and

WHEREAS, the City has committed the funds to design and obtain approvals for the grade separated crossing, but does not have all the funding necessary to construct the grade separated

crossing, and thus will need the financial support and cooperation of the UPRR, the Puyallup Tribe, and other stakeholders in order to build the grade separated crossing; now, therefore,

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIFE DOES RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

**Section 1.** The Council expresses its intent to immediately proceed with the preparation of the design and construction drawings, and to obtain the necessary approvals for the construction of a grade separated pedestrian and vehicle crossing of the UPRR right of way at 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue East.

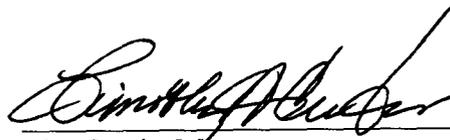
**Section 2.** The Council further expresses its intent to seek other funding partners so that the construction of the grade separated railroad crossing at 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue East can commence as early as 2015.

**Section 3.** The City Manager is directed to include in his proposed 2015-2016 biannual budget sufficient funds for the preparation of the grade separated construction drawings and bid documents, and such other funds as can reasonably be provided to help pay for a portion of the construction costs should other funding become available.

**Section 4.** The City Manager is further directed to make such applications as are necessary and appropriate, and to negotiate agreements with the Puyallup Tribe, the UPRR, and other funding partners, so that if at all possible the construction of the grade separated crossing can commence in 2015 and be completed as soon as possible thereafter.

**Section 5.** The City Manager is further authorized to seek a modification of the current WUTC order so that the construction of a grade separated crossing at 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue East would be authorized, and, upon completion of its construction, the at grade crossing would be abandoned.

ADOPTED by the City Council at an open public meeting held on the 26<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2014.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tim Curtis, Mayor

Attest:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Carol Etgen, City Clerk