

Connell Rail Interchange



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FACT SHEET

Background - The Connell Rail Interchange is located in the City of Connell in eastern Washington, as the Columbia Basin Railroad (CBRW) line intersects with the BNSF. The Connell site provides access to a three-county region, abundant with agriculture and industry. Rail congestion at the existing intersection is caused by an outdated and undersized rail interchange configuration. The current downtown location impacts safety and causes onerous vehicle delays at primary street crossings, and creates a pinch-point for rail transportation.

The CBRW and BNSF Railway desire to expand and modernize the Connell Rail Interchange. This upgrade will enhance the ability to perform interchanging of longer trains, while minimizing the mainline operations and capacity time. The improvements will allow for better service, directly affecting transit times for unit trains. A new reconfigured interchange will lessen the delay times experienced by vehicular traffic at the public road crossings, and provide enhanced safety.

Local Action - The Connell Rail Interchange Coalition has facilitated remarkable collaboration to develop solutions to the deficient interchange. This project links massive rail construction investing all along the Great Northern Corridor. Coordinated efforts will achieve rail improvement, long-term sustainability, and economic growth. Matching funds have been pledged by 11

entities, with proportional benefit and participation.

Local and Regional Benefit - The project is a high-priority need to help facilitate economic development in and around Connell. It has local value and regional benefit with committed private partnerships and municipal support. Rail infrastructure improvements will help add economic stability and year-round, family-wage jobs. Enhanced rail service will lessen roadway congestion, adding cost-competitive advantages and options. The importance of the Connell Rail Interchange goes well beyond the City of Connell as it impacts economic prosperity all across the state of Washington. The expanded growth in the commercial demand for rail service has heightened the need for modern improvements to the Connell intersection.

Project Schedule - Design efforts for the new rail interchange, funded by a Washington State Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB) grant, were initiated in August 2015. Following receipt of the CERB grant, the State allocated \$10 million towards further design, permitting, and construction of the project. Preliminary design services have an anticipated completion date of late 2015. Final design and permitting is anticipated to take approximately 12 months with construction beginning in spring of 2017. The goal for project completion is fall of 2017.

The new Connell rail interchange will improve multi-modal safety and freight mobility resulting in greater regional economic development.

For more information, please contact:

Jed Crowther at 509-234-2701 or by email at: jcrowther@connellwa.org
<http://www.cityofconnell.com>

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