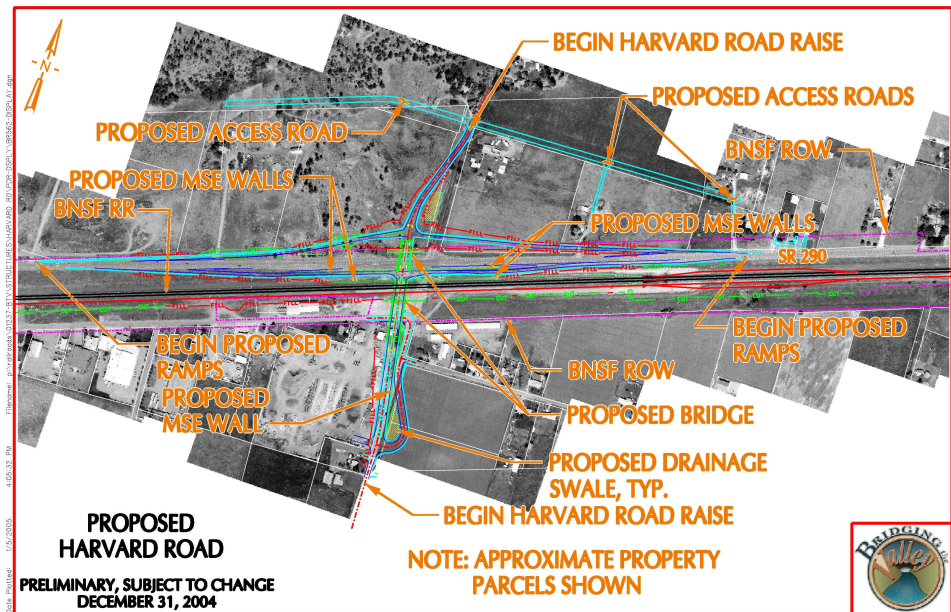


Harvard Road / BNSF Grade Separation

Spokane County, WA

Project Location

Harvard Road is a two lane north-south rural major-collector road in Spokane County. It crosses the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Main line near SR 290 (Trent Avenue). Harvard Road currently carries approximately 2,780 vehicles per day. The BNSF line carries between 30 and 50 trains per day. Harvard Road lies 3,500 feet west of the North McKinzie Road at-grade crossing and is currently protected by standard railroad gates and signals.



Project Description

This project proposes to reconstruct Harvard Road to pass over three BNSF tracks and SR 290 (Trent Ave). SR 290 will be accessed with on and off-ramps similar to the Sullivan Road interchange.

This project will allow Spokane County to petition to close the North McKinzie Road at-grade crossing, which would further improve public safety by reducing the possibility of rail/vehicle collisions at this location.

This area is projected to grow significantly over the next 30 years, increasing traffic on Harvard Road where it crosses the BNSF tracks by 50%. The Harvard Road project would provide a safe grade separated crossing at a critical location (half way between the Barker Road and Starr Road grade separated crossings), making it possible to close the North McKinzie Road at-grade crossings of the BNSF track, and making it a critical element of the Bridging the Valley project.

Proposed Schedule

The Design Report, completed in December 2004, is based on guidance generated from a preliminary study done in 2001. The Design Report incorporates comments from the railroads, Washington State Department of Transportation, Spokane County, and the public. Environmental approval for the entire Bridging the Valley project was received in August 2006. Final design and construction will begin when funds are available.

Summary of Benefits

When completed, the Bridging the Valley project will separate vehicle traffic from train traffic in the 42 mile corridor between Spokane, Washington and Athol, Idaho. By removing all at-grade rail crossings, Bridging the Valley will:

- Improve public safety by reducing rail / vehicle collisions;
- Improve emergency access to residents and businesses along the corridor;
- Eliminate waiting time for vehicles at rail crossings;
- Reduce noise levels—no more train whistles near crossings;
- Improve traffic flow due to separated grade crossings; and
- Enhance development opportunities with a single rail corridor served by the region's largest railroads.

