



September 21, 2026

Dear Director Williams,

The Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood District (HAND) submitted a letter to the Surface Transportation Board (STB) asking that Union Pacific (UPRR) be required to mitigate the blocked-crossing problem at SE 12th, SE 11th, and SE 8th as a condition of approval of its proposed merger with Norfolk Southern. That letter is attached. We are writing separately to ask the City of Portland to take an active and proactive role in what happens next.

We deliberately did not propose a specific remedy in our STB letter -- we don't think it's our place to design the engineering or operational fix. But we do have a big stake in the outcome, and strong views on what a successful resolution will look like.

Here's what we're asking of the city:

1. **Make HAND a party to any negotiation or settlement discussion** between the city, UPRR, and the STB regarding crossing mitigation. We have been living with this problem daily and tracking it for decades; we should have a seat at the table, not just be informed after the fact.
2. **Don't accept a token or partial fix.** A merger review is one of the only moments when a railroad is genuinely exposed to public pressure -- outside of it, federal law gives railroads wide latitude to block crossings indefinitely. We understand the city has already filed a Notice of Intent to comment on the merger, and that the STB has determined the traffic increase is significant enough to require a full Environmental Impact Statement. The EIS is a real point of leverage, and we're asking the city to use it fully rather than settle for a modest concession UPRR can absorb without addressing the fundamental problems caused by operations at Brooklyn Yard.

We recognize the city is already engaged on this, including work toward a Federal Railroad Administration grant to study crossing impacts in the Central Eastside, and we appreciate that. We ask that the city treat the merger review as the opportunity it is to secure a durable, binding commitment from UPRR, not just a short-term or voluntary gesture, and that our neighborhood be part of shaping what that commitment looks like.

Thank you for your continued attention to this issue.

HAND Board