



ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 01/12/2016

MEDIA CONTACT: Angie Holdsworth (602) 542-0844

The Arizona Corporation Commission Approves Railroad Upgrade to Improve Safety and Traffic Flow on a Busy Valley Roadway

(Phoenix) The Arizona Corporation Commission approved an upgrade to the BNSF railroad crossing at Grand Avenue and Thunderbird in El Mirage.

The finished project will have two eastbound thru lanes, one westbound thru lane, two westbound left turn lanes, and a shared thru/right lane. A concrete crossing surface will be added with a raised median along with flashing lights and gates on both sides.

Construction will begin in May so as not to interfere with school traffic. Construction will last 28 days with road closures during that time.

ADOT's future plans for Grand Avenue include widening the roadway to six lanes, three in each direction along with left and right hand turn lanes. Every rail crossing within the scope of the widening project will have to be upgraded with new signal equipment, including LED flashing lights, and automatic gates. Other improvements will include upgrading the traffic signal preemption to include new traffic controllers and new crossing detection equipment. Last month, the Commission approved an upgrade at Grand Avenue/U.S. 60 & Bell Road in Surprise. That project will begin in April and will take 18 months to complete.

The projects are funded by the Federal Highway Administration pursuant to Section 130. The Commission's Railroad Safety Section along with ADOT, railroads, and municipalities conduct annual statewide inspections of crossings that have been identified for safety upgrades and are eligible for Section 130 funding. The Commission's Railroad Safety Section begins their next series of inspections this month.