

MAS Railroad Crossing Guidance

February 2024

23 CFR § 646.214(b)(2)

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 109(e), where a railroad-highway grade crossing is located within the limits of or near the terminus of a Federal-aid highway project for construction of a new highway or improvement of the existing roadway, the crossing shall not be opened for unrestricted use by traffic, or the project accepted by FHWA **until adequate warning devices for the crossing are installed and functioning properly.**

The VAOT defines “near the terminus” as satisfying one or more of the following conditions:

1. A Grade Crossing Advance Warning Sign for the crossing is required to be located within the Federal-aid highway project limits in accordance with the [MUTCD Part 8, Section 8B.06](#).
2. An intersection traffic signal within the Federal-aid highway project limits is or should be coordinated with the railroad crossing’s flashing light signal and gate.
3. Based on engineering judgement, it is determined that the Federal-aid highway project may impact the safety or operation of the crossing in some fashion.

This information was derived from VAOT Policy 3026 – Coordination of Railroad Grade Crossings and Federal Aid Highway Projects.

VAOT Highway Railroad Public Grade Crossing Guidance:

- I. No work shall be planned, designed, or constructed related to a highway-railroad crossing without input and consent from the VTrans Rail & Aviation Bureau.
- II. Federal law requires notification to the railroad owner prior to entering the railroad right-of-way. This ensures safety and access control.
- III. For Railroads **owned by the State of Vermont**, any time that work, (infrastructure work, utility crossings, inspections, surveys, etc.), will be performed in a railroad right-of-way, a Railroad Worker Clearance request form must first be completed, reviewed by Rail Property Management (RPM), forwarded to the appropriate railroad for approval, and then the railroad will schedule a flagger for your chosen workday.
- IV. **Design Phase:** For railroad-highway grade crossings within the limits or near the terminus of Federal-aid Highway projects and that do not have adequate warning devices, the Federal-aid Highway Project Manager shall confirm the scope of work includes addressing deficiencies in the warning devices or that a separate project has been programmed to address the deficiencies in advance of the Federal-aid Highway Project anticipated construction.
- V. **Construction Phase:** If railroad-highway grade crossings within the limits of near the terminus of a Federal-aid Highway construction project are identified as having inadequate warning devices, the Resident Engineer shall bring this to the attention of the Federal-aid Highway Project Manager. The Federal-aid Highway Project Manager shall discuss the deficiencies with the VTrans Rail & Aviation Bureau and the VTrans Asset Management Bureau to determine the appropriate course of action.

When the VAOT Rail and Aviation Section analyzes a highway railroad crossing, they utilize a Sufficiency Rating Form to determine if a Diagnostic Study will be performed. If the Sufficiency rating is above 60, a Diagnostic Study will not be required and the VAOT Crossing Engineer will provide guidance concerning the railroad crossing in question. If a Diagnostic Study is required, refer to the Public Grade Crossing Diagnostic Study Team Review Procedure within the [VAOT Highway Railroad Public Grade Crossing Guidance manual](#).