



FDM 17-5-1 Sources and Types of Railroad Projects

May 2, 2003

1.1 Improvement Projects

Railroad Projects originate in a number of different programs. See [FDM 17-15-1](#) for an overview of WisDOT improvement programs.

Railroad projects vary widely in the type of work they include. While the majority involve warning devices at crossings, either new installations, upgrades or relocations, there are many other types of work often required at the railroad – roadway interface. These include:

- active warning devices
- crossing surface projects
- railroad communication line adjustments for structure or grading projects
- easements to accommodate roadway appurtenances
- accommodations for: culverts, slopes, ditches & beam guard
- separation (bridge) projects on either the roadway or the railroad
- TEA (Transportation Economic Assistance) Projects

1.2 Other Projects

Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA)

The goal of the Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA) program is to attract and retain business firms in Wisconsin and thus create or retain jobs.

The (TEA) program is a part of the improvement program, and provides 50% state grants to governing bodies, private businesses, and consortiums for road, rail, harbor and airport projects that help attract employers to Wisconsin, or encourage business and industry to remain and expand in the state.

Applications are first come, first serve, and funded when all eligibility information is complete and satisfactory. For more information, see Chapter 06-07-01 of the Program Management Manual.

1.3 Railroad Status Report

As noted in [Attachment 1.1](#), all railroad related projects in the improvement programs, regardless of source or type of work, are brought together in the Railroad Status Report which basically tracks the status of railroad projects through a series of “milestones”. The Railroad Status Report has two forms. [Signal Projects](#) include all work related to warning devices and [Construction Projects](#) include everything else. All projects are initially entered by the Railroads and Harbors Section (RHS) when the project is authorized and updated by the RHS as railroad negotiations progress. See the RHS Railroad Coordination Handbook for more detailed information.

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

[Attachment 1.1](#) Railroad-Highway Projects, Status Report Flow Chart

FDM 17-5-5 Relevant Statutes

August 25, 2010

5.1 Introduction

The authority for the administration of WisDOT and OCR policies and procedures described in this chapter is provided by the following referenced legislation. If the statutes do not grant WisDOT the authority to do something, then WisDOT cannot do it.

Also referenced here are the standards, guidelines and other technical data to assist the user in the administration of highway improvement programs affecting railroads and other railroad crossing warning device projects. These are not all-inclusive.

5.2 Legislation

[Section 84.02\(4\)\(e\)](#) directs the Department to adopt a manual establishing a uniform system of traffic control devices, consistent with and conforming to the current national standard. That manual currently is the Manual on

Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) along with the Wisconsin Supplement to that Manual.

Section 84.05 - Railroad Crossing Improvements. This section describes the general authority of the WisDOT to plan and construct highway improvements that cross or otherwise affect railroad facilities and property, and to make the necessary arrangements, including any cost sharing, with the railroad companies as well as all other persons of interest. If arrangements cannot be made the WisDOT "Shall lay the matter before the Office of the Commissioner of Railroads (OCR)." The OCR proceedings shall be in accordance with ss. 195.28 and 195.29 Stats. described later in this procedure. If WisDOT and the railroad reach agreement for a grade separation structure and execute a stipulation without an OCR hearing, a copy of the stipulation is to be furnished to OCR for information and record maintenance.

Section 84.06(4) - Special Contracts With Railroads and Utilities. This section authorizes the WisDOT to contract for work by railroad (and utility) forces when it is deemed more feasible and advantageous to the state. Such contracts exceeding \$5,000 are not valid until they are approved by the Governor.

85.077 Railroad projects and competitive bidding. This section was enacted in 2009 to require that the department or the recipient of public funds for a project involving the construction, rehabilitation, improvement, demolition, or repair of rail property or rail property improvements shall let the project by contract on the basis of competitive bids and shall award the contract to the lowest responsible bidder. The legislation provides exceptions for projects that are in response to a public emergency, are for the installation or maintenance of crossing warning devices, or are estimated to cost less than \$25,000. Exceptions are also provided for projects on property owned or leased by a railroad and the project is performed by the railroad using its own employees, or if no responsible bid is received. Other than for the exceptions allowed, a railroad may not use a continuing contractor or preferred service provider on a publicly funded project. The section does not apply to professional service contracts such as for engineers, architects, and the like. If a railroad wishes to furnish materials for work to be performed by a contractor, the same bidding requirements apply to the materials furnished by the railroad. The only exception would be if the materials are routinely kept in stock by the railroad and the bidding documents state those routinely kept materials will be furnished by the railroad from its existing stock.

Section 86.12 - Highway Grade Crossings: Construction and Repair. This section relates to the railroad's ongoing responsibility at highway crossings. It requires railroad companies to keep railroad crossing surfaces in good condition and repair for highway travel. The railroad's crossing maintenance responsibility extends to a line four feet on either side of the outside rail and for the entire width of the adjacent roadway (including shoulders and sidewalks). Only railroad crossings of public streets and highways are included under this section. Railroad crossing reconstruction or improvement work may require the same or different surfacing materials from those existing in order to provide a suitable crossing for highway travel.

The town, county, village or city may give notice to the railroad of the need to improve or repair the surface of a specific crossing within its borders. The notice is by means of a resolution passed by the town board, county board, village board or common council of the municipality. The resolution is to identify the crossing and describe the work required.

The railroad is to respond to such notice within 30 days of receiving the resolution. If no action is taken by the railroad to comply with the resolution, the respective board or common council may file a complaint with the Office of the Commissioner of Railroads (OCR). The OCR will investigate the matter according to the provisions of s. 195 Stats.

Section 86.13 - Railroads to Maintain Highway Crossings. This section requires railroad companies to grade, construct and maintain railroad crossings in good and safe condition for public travel. This provision also applies to street and highway improvements adjacent to the railroad crossing and requires that the railroad improve, pave or surface the crossing to accommodate the planned improvement. The railroad responsibility for the crossing extends to a line 4 feet on either side of the outside rail and for the entire width of the roadway (See design notes on the back of the standard detail drawing of Pavement Detail for Railroad Approach, [SDD 13B1](#) Chapter 16.

Section 86.13 covers all public rail-highway grade crossings. Further, this provision does not restrict cities from making special assessments for street improvements against railroads under the provisions of s. 66.694 Stats.

The principal difference between s. 86.12 Stats. and s. 86.13 Stats is the extent of the crossing work required. Section 86.12 primarily addresses on-going maintenance to keep or improve the existing crossing surfaces. Section 86.13 is in response to a highway improvement project and, in addition to addressing surface condition, requires the railroad to grade, construct and surface an existing crossing to accommodate the adjacent street or highway improvement. The railroad is to match the improved roadway in line and grade and to surface the crossing with suitable materials.

Certain highway improvements may be of such character and alignment that an affected railroad crossing may require an alteration. For an explanation of a crossing alteration see s.195.29 Stats.

Section 86.13 provides for a public board, committee or officer in charge of highway improvements adjacent to a railroad crossing to give notice to the railroad company responsible for track maintenance and improvements when improvement or repair of a crossing is required. The notice shall be in writing and shall be specific in describing the crossing location and the crossing work required.

The railroad is to respond to a notice within 30 days of receipt. If no action is taken by the railroad to comply with the notice, the person giving the notice may file a complaint with the OCR. For crossings on state trunk highways, or for crossings on federal-aid improvement projects, the complaint will be filed by the Railroads and Harbors Section (RHS).

The OCR will investigate the matter according to the provisions of s.195 Stats.

It is required that a notice be sent to the affected railroad for all projects at grade crossings which are funded with state or federal monies and this same procedure is recommended for projects regardless of funding. See [FDM 17-20-1](#) for details of this activity.

Section 86.13(5) provides for reimbursement to the railroad for up to 85 percent of its costs for the repair of highway crossings on state trunk highways only. Repair with like-kind materials is not a requirement for this type of maintenance. Such work however must be approved, programmed and authorized by the WisDOT prior to actual construction to be eligible for reimbursement. (Railroad crossings on connecting streets and highways, although marked as state routes, do not qualify for reimbursement under this section as per memo dated 7/24/91 from the Secretary's office.) Notices for repair of railroad crossings shall also be specific as to the work required and division of costs. If a cost-share is to be offered the railroad on a project funded with state or federal monies, RHS will make that offer in a formal proposal.

Section 86.135 - Railroad Highway Crossings; Traffic control. This section requires railroads to provide proper traffic control when construction and maintenance activities are performed at public highway rail crossings.

Section 195.28 - Warning Devices at Grade Crossings. This section describes provisions for the installation of warning devices at public railroad crossings. Under the Administrative Code of the OCR the railroad is required to submit its plan and circuit design for railroad crossing signals to the OCR for approval. The installation of new railroad crossing signals or the up grade of existing signals may be made by the railroad without an order of the OCR, but the plans and circuit drawings must still be approved by the OCR.

Section 195.285 - Exempt Railroad Crossings. This section provides for exempting certain vehicles described in s. 346.45 Stats. from the requirement to stop at railroad crossings when a train is not present. A petition to the OCR for a public hearing is required. The provision is applicable to crossings with occasional and slow moving trains and a high volume of vehicular traffic including buses and trucks transporting hazardous materials. The selection criteria is further detailed in [FDM 17-45-25](#).

Section 195.29 - Railroad Highway Crossings. Under this statute, proposed projects for the construction of new grade crossings of railroad tracks, new separation-of-grade structures and alterations of existing crossings are submitted to the OCR for its review, investigation and order. Current OCR administrative rules should be consulted, particularly RR 1.025 (Wis. Admin. Code) which sets forth the documents that must be filed with the OCR at the time the petition is filed. A public hearing by the OCR is required, unless all parties are in agreement and improvements proceed under s. 84.05 Stats. It is the practice of the WisDOT to obtain prior concurrence of the railroad for such projects by making an agreement for grade crossings and a stipulation for structures. Grade crossing projects requiring new public crossings or significant relocation of existing crossings always require a hearing and approval from the OCR, and should always include an evaluation of opportunities to close nearby, lesser used crossings.

Highway improvements at railroad grade crossings made under the provisions of s. 195.29 Stats. are distinguished from those made under s. 86.13 Stats. by qualifying and identifying highway changes which are considered to be alterations. Whereas the railroad companies are responsible for making certain crossing improvements under s. 86.13, the costs for crossing work required under the provisions of s. 195.29 are apportioned between the railroad and the highway authority. The railroad or public highway authority that initiates the alterations is generally responsible for the cost of the work based on their respective responsibilities and the benefits received. The cost -sharing is negotiated by the parties or determined by the OCR.

Changes in railroad crossings required to accommodate a highway improvement are set forth below as a guide in identifying railroad grade crossing alterations:

1. The crossing is relocated.
2. The number of traffic lanes is increased.
3. The grade of the highway requires the raising or lowering of the railroad track by six inches or more.

The state pays 100 percent of the costs associated with these changes.

Section 195.29(6) – View at Crossings. It is important to provide and maintain clear view of approaching trains at rail-highway grade crossings. The railroad and highway authorities are required to clear brush and trees from their respective rights of way for a distance of not less than 330 feet in each direction from the center of the crossing intersection. Both parties will be required to clear their rights of way for a greater distance if track alignment or train speeds require a greater train-viewing distance and ordered by the OCR.

Clearing of vegetation on private property within the 330-foot triangle is a responsibility of the property owner. For new crossings, or for major alterations to an existing crossing, the OCR may require the petitioning party to acquire easements to attain sufficient viewing distances. Section 195.29(6) Stats. provides a means for the OCR to require a property owner to clear vegetation from the 330-foot triangle upon the filing of a complaint, and after a public hearing on the matter. This is rare, however, as the municipality is in a better position to have this work performed under a local ordinance.

Section 349.065 directs that local authorities must place and maintain traffic devices on facilities under their jurisdiction that are in accordance with the MUTCD and the Wisconsin Supplement.

PSC 132 (Wis. Admin. Code) covers in detail the conditions for placing public utility facilities within railroad right-of-way and the procedures, conditions, requirements, responsibilities, and compensations related to such occupancy requirements. Refer to the Railroad Coordination Handbook for guidance.

5.3 OCR Regulatory Activities

Section 84.05 Railroad Crossing Improvements. On highways under department jurisdiction and which cross a railroad, if the department determines that the construction or reconstruction of a grade separation or the rearrangement or elimination of a grade crossing or other rearrangement of the highway or tracks is necessary in the interest of public safety or for convenience of public travel, the department is responsible for the development of a plan, the development of cost estimates, the coordination of construction and the apportionment of the cost. If the department is unable to reach an acceptable agreement with the parties involved regarding the apportionment of cost the matter shall go before the OCR. The OCR shall review the proceedings and hold a hearing in accordance with ss. 195.28 and 195.29 Stats. and shall apportion the cost of the construction and maintenance. The executed stipulation for a grade separation is to be furnished to OCR.

Section 86.12 Highway Railroad Grade Crossings; Construction and Repair. The railroad companies are responsible for keeping the surface of the crossings between tracks and rails and extending four feet beyond the outermost rail in good condition and repair for highway travel. Local governments may require the railroad to repair a crossing by resolution that is sent to the railroad. Failure of the railroad to perform the repairs could result in the local government filing a complaint with the OCR.

Section 86.13 Railroad to Maintain Highway Crossings. When roadway improvements are performed on crossing approaches, the railroad must repair or improve the crossing to accommodate the roadway improvement. The same procedure as s. 86.12 Stats. is followed for local roads. On state trunk highways, the department may reimburse the railroad for 85 percent of the repair or improvement costs. The railroad may be reimbursed for repair or improvement of a crossing on a connecting highway using improvement dollars when the crossing is within the limits of a highway improvement project. See FDM Section 17-30, Crossing Surface Projects.

Section 88.87 Railroad Grades Not to Obstruct Natural Drainage. Railroad companies are responsible to construct and maintain their grades so as not to impede the natural flow of storm water. If a railroad company fails to comply with this Statute, the DNR or any person or party may file a complaint with the OCR which will investigate and rule on the matter.

Section 190.08 Streams, Highways Restored. The railroads are responsible for the restoration of streams and highways a result of their construction of railroad track and structures. This statute is also applicable to railroad track abandonments. Some railroad facilities are permitted to remain after the line is abandoned for various reasons and generally with the concurrence of the abutting landowner, DNR and the highway authority.

Section 190.16(5) Removal; Industrial Spur Tracks. The Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) Termination Act of 1995 preempts the OCR jurisdiction over the removal, discontinuance or abandonment of spur tracks. The position now taken is that the OCR does retain jurisdiction over the removal of spur tracks that have been abandoned by definition. Section 85.09(3) (b) Stats. defines abandoned rail property. If an unused spur track is within the limits of a highway project, the affected parties are free to negotiate the removal of the track. This can either be a real estate item initiated and negotiated by the party responsible for property acquisition or land rights on the project, or as a force work project initiated and negotiated by the highway maintaining authority for a locally funded project or by the RHS for a state and federal-aid project. For a state or federal-aid project, the region is responsible for identifying abandoned spur tracks. Usually this removal and patching of the void is to

be an item in the construction project unless the railroad company having operating rights on the track prefers to arrange the removal. When parties are not in agreement or when ownership of the track is unknown, the OCR will rule on the matter. In the petition to the OCR, include a list of property owners along the track in question.

Section 192.29(1) Train Speeds at Street and Highway Crossings. The Interstate Commerce Commission Termination Act of 1995 preempts the OCR from restricting train speeds.

Section 192.31 Telltales Over Railroads. The minimum vertical clearance above top of rail is 23 feet as specified in s. 192.31(3) Stats. Railroad companies are required to install and maintain telltales when the vertical clearance is less than 23 feet. The OCR may issue Orders granting exceptions to both the vertical clearance requirement and the telltales requirement. If a railroad and the maintaining authority of the overpass structure reach agreement through a signed stipulation that clearance less than 23 feet is mutually acceptable, the OCR may issue the necessary Order without public hearing. Title 23 Code of Federal Regulations, Subpart B Part 646.212(a)(3) and the Appendix to Subpart B determine the maximum clearances for structures on which federal funds can normally be used. See also the OCR Administrative Rules RR2.14 through 2.16.

Section 192.33 Fences, Cattle Guards, Crossings. This statute as well as ss.192.34 to 192.37 Stats. all relate to the requirements of the railroad to construct fences along railroad right of way.

Section 192.53 Railroad Track Clearance. Generally, the minimum lateral clearance measured from the centerline of track is 8 feet 6 inches for tangent track. Exemptions exist for certain facilities, but require OCR approval. For each degree of track curvature, the lateral clearance is increased one inch.

Section 195.28 Protecting Grade Crossings. This section covers both passive and active devices. Petitions to the OCR for the installation of new or changes in existing railroad crossing warning devices require an investigation, finding and order. In some instances a public hearing may also be required. No petition is required when the WisDOT and the railroad agree on the proposed changes for crossings on State Trunk Highways.

Section 195.285 Exempt Railroad Crossing. Petitions to the OCR to exempt certain vehicles identified in s. 346.45 Stats. from stopping at street and highway crossings of railroad tracks, except in common with all traffic, requires a public hearing, finding and order of the OCR (see s. 346.45 Stats. and [FDM 17-45-25](#)).

Section 195.286 Highway Crossings, Advance Warning Signs. This section relates to the furnishing of such signs to the county for use at county and town road crossings, a description of the sign, its location, and penalties for unauthorized removal. Railroads are responsible for supplying the signs and the highway authority is responsible for installing them.

Section 195.29 Railroad Highway Crossing. Projects to establish new rail-highway crossings or to close or make alterations at existing crossings often require a public hearing, finding and order by the OCR. Safety at crossings is a primary consideration in determining whether a crossing should be permitted, the manner of crossing and the apportionment of costs.

Section 195.29(6) - View at Crossings. It is important to provide and maintain clear reverse view of approaching trains at highway rail grade crossings. The railroad and highway authorities are required to clear brush and trees from their respective rights of way for a distance of not less than 330 feet in each direction from the center of the crossing intersection. Railroad companies may be required to clear their rights of way for a greater distance if track alignment or train speeds require a greater train-viewing distance.

Clearing of vegetation on private property within the 330-foot triangle is a responsibility of the property owner. For new crossings, or for major alterations to an existing crossing, the OCR may require the petitioning party to acquire sufficient easements to attain sufficient viewing distances. Section 195.29(6) provides a means for the OCR to require a property owner to clear vegetation from the 330-foot triangle upon the filing of a complaint, and after a public hearing on the matter. This is rare, however, as the municipality may be in a better position to have this work performed under a local ordinance.

Section 195.31 Bridges Made Safe. Complaints may be filed with the OCR for an alleged unsafe condition of a railroad bridge which may endanger public safety. Generally an investigation and a public hearing would be held on a complaint and a finding and order issued by the OCR on the remedy, if required.

Section 349.085 Authority to Install Stop Signs at Railroad Grade Crossings. This section allows local authorities on highways under their maintenance authority to install stop signs by ordinance at public railroad crossings which they deem to be necessary for public safety.

The MUTCD 8B.07 covers the criteria for stop signs.

Sections 350.137, 350.138, 350.139 and 350.1395 Snowmobile Rail Crossings. These sections relate to the assignment of statutory authority to the Department of Natural Resources for rule making in regard to public snowmobile railroad crossings and the latest DNR Rule should be consulted. In a rare instance the WisDOT

may have a snowmobile facility incorporated into an enhancement project or highway project.

FDM 17-5-10 Negotiating Guidelines

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1. RHS handles all official WisDOT negotiations with railroads. While region involvement and assistance is typically required, regions are not involved often enough in the variety of projects that occur statewide, to develop sufficient expertise. Another important aspect is consistency in dealing with all railroads, which typically operate in more than one WisDOT region.
2. While consistency and expertise are the primary rationale for centralizing railroad negotiations, it's important that DRC's meet, cooperate and maintain good working relationships with the local field personnel of the railroads operating in their region.
3. Start early! Lead times vary, but are very important when negotiating with railroads. Recognize that WisDOT can be placed at a disadvantage in negotiations on an important sensitive project if negotiations are not completed in a timely manner. WisDOT's desired schedule for implementation can be delayed by the railroad which may lead to time-consuming hearings before the OCR. All of this may lead to unfortunate but necessary compromises by WisDOT. Discussing project strategies and schedules with RHS as early as possible is the best way to avoid placing WisDOT in a poor negotiating position.
4. Federal law and regulations largely dictate the railroad's cost obligations on highway projects built with federal aid (and most projects dealing with railroads do involve federal aid). There are always site specific details to be negotiated, but many basic elements are a matter of law.
5. There are similar statutory limitations on the state of Wisconsin's negotiating authority. The state's authority in all matters is limited to the "powers that can be found within the four corners of the statutes," i.e., specifically identified. If the statutes do not specifically empower WisDOT to do something, then WisDOT cannot do it.
6. Finally, it is WisDOT's goal in railroad negotiations to do what is "reasonable under the circumstances."

FDM 17-5-15 Manuals and Textbooks

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15.1 Manuals

1. Department of Transportation, Facilities Development Manual and Standard Specifications for Highway and Structure Construction. The provisions of the Facilities Development Manual, Standard Specifications for Highway and Structure Construction and the supplemental specifications apply to proposed rail-highway work unless otherwise provided by the project plans and special provisions, and the agreement with the railroad. FDM design elements are adopted by the WisDOT as its standards. In event a railroad company requests that these standards be exceeded, they may be if approved by the WisDOT Bureau of Highway Development and the railroad company agrees in writing to fund the incremental difference in cost for the requested design and construction.
2. American Railway Engineering and Maintenance-of-Way Association (AREMA). The manual of the American Railway Engineering and Maintenance-of-Way Association provides recommend engineering practices associated with railroad facilities. While these are generally accepted by the various railroad companies, each railroad may also have certain standards and practices that they have adopted for use on their rail lines. However, in the selection and development of a particular design, WisDOT should not be expected to provide a more expensive design or product than the railroad would provide for improvements financed entirely with railroad company funds.
3. FHWA Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Part VIII of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices provides standards for normal application of highway marking, signing and train activated warning devices at railroad crossings. This subject is also addressed in [FDM 17-60-15](#). Part VI of the MUTCD provides standards for traffic control during crossing construction and maintenance work. Note that the "Wisconsin Supplement to the MUTCD" is a part of the MUTCD.
4. Code of Federal Regulations. Chapter 23 Code of Federal Regulations, describes general design requirements and the eligibility of project work for financing railroad-highway improvements with federal-aid funds. The Code of Federal Regulations website address is <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html>.
5. Financial Integrated Improvement Programming System (FIIPS) Manual, developed and maintained

by DTIM.

6. Program Management Manual. A manual by the Bureau of State Highway Programs for the programming and funding procedures of the various WisDOT engineering, right-of-way and construction programs.
7. AASHTO Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets. This Manual by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials provides a unified policy on design elements for highway appurtenances.
8. Institute of Traffic Engineers –1997, “Pre-emption of Traffic Signals at or near Railroad Grade Crossings with active warning devices.”
9. The 2002 USDOT Highway Grade Crossing Technical Working Group (TWG) Report providing “Guidance on Traffic Control Devices at Highway – Rail Grade Crossings”.

15.2 Textbooks

1. Railroad-Highway Grade Crossing Handbook, Second Edition (1986), FHWA. This handbook was developed by FHWA to provide general information on rail-highway grade crossing safety and operational problems.
2. Railroad Curves and Earthwork by Allen. This is a text book on the construction of railroad tracks. It may be used as a reference when laying out a railroad track relocation or temporary run around (Shoo-fly). There are other textbooks that could be used for the same purpose. Plan proposals effecting changes in railroad tracks are to be approved by the railroad.
3. Railroad Engineering by Hay (Second Addition). This book provides a comprehensive treatment of fundamental railroad engineering principles and practical applications.

FDM 17-5-20 Data Sources

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20.1 Introduction

See the RHS Railroad Coordination Handbook for more detailed information.

This subject deals with physical data and railroad and highway operational data at railroad crossings. Other data regarding railroad project costs, project status, etc is available elsewhere in this chapter under the appropriate subject.

20.2 Background

Railroad crossing data is available in the WisDOT Railroad Crossing DATABASE. This database is available on the Internet at <http://safetydata.fra.dot.gov/officeofsafety/>

All data is identified by a unique Railroad Crossing I.D. Number. Each railroad crossing is assigned a unique number by the operating railroad. The initial number assigned to a crossing is identified in the field with a sign made of plastic. This WisDOT number is used to identify the crossing and for recording various facts and information about both the highway and railroad.

20.3 WisDOT Railroad Data File

WisDOT developed a very similar but somewhat enhanced parallel DATABASE in the late 70's and has maintained data in both files so that they are as current as possible. However, the railroads are responsible for much of the data and their commitment to update has varied among them and their efforts over the years generally have been less aggressive than those of WisDOT.

To enhance maintainability, the FRA issued a “P.C. Version” of the database about 1990 called the “GX” Data File, and since that time most railroads have generally been more receptive to updating their physical and operational data.