



Chad Sundem
General Manager
Twin Cities Division

BNSF Railway Company
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763-782-3467

February 7, 2020

The Honorable Michael Brown
City of Grand Forks
255 N. 4th Street
Grand Forks, ND 58203

Dear Mayor Brown:

BNSF Railway values our relationship with the community of Grand Forks, where many of our employees and their families live, work and recreate. In that spirit, I am writing to advise you that BNSF will be increasing the maximum allowable train speeds through Grand Forks on our main line track from 3rd Street in downtown Grand Forks through the city to Demers Avenue, just east of 55th Street.

The planned change will take effect on or after February 28, 2020 and will increase maximum allowable track speeds to 35 mph from the 20 mph maximum today. This change will include only train traffic traversing Demers Avenue, 5th Street, 4th Street, and 3rd Street and does not impact train speeds at other crossings on other tracks in the city. It is important to note that this is a maximum speed and not every train will travel at that speed.

Train speed is regulated by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), which sets maximum train speeds by Class of track. Depending on that Class, appropriate speed ranges are set and certain requirements for maintenance and inspection of track have to be met. In this case, the track in Grand Forks meets those requirements and this change in maximum allowable speed is within that range.

In the past, we've heard concerns from Grand Forks residents about the amount of time that trains occupy grade crossings. This change will help address that issue by allowing through trains to move through town more efficiently and therefore reduce the time they are occupying at-grade crossings. Additionally, BNSF recently upgraded track infrastructure, including removing jointed rail in our main track and upgrading yard switches. Those improvements will further improve efficiency and help to mitigate the impact of rail operations on the Grand Forks community.

For this track and all of the track on our network, BNSF continues to conduct extensive track inspection programs using state-of-the-art technology and engineering employees with expert training. We are proud to be a partner in Grand Forks' economy and the larger economy of North Dakota. We appreciate our relationship with the community and hope this information is helpful to you. If you have any questions, please contact Amy McBeth, BNSF's Regional Director of Public Affairs, at 763-782-3212 or amy.mcbeth@bnsf.com.

Sincerely,

Chad Sundem
General Manager

cc: Dana Sande, City Council President
Chief Mark Nelson, Grand Forks Police Department