

ORIGINAL

Decision No. 16760.

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA.

In the matter of the application of the City of Burbank, a municipal corporation, for permission to install a grade crossing over the tracks of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company at Victory Place, in the City of Burbank, California.

} Application No. 12,434.

James H. Mitchell, City Attorney, for applicant.
Frank Karr, for Southern Pacific Company.

SEAVEY, COMMISSIONER:

O P I N I O N

In this proceeding authority is sought to construct Victory Place at grade across Southern Pacific Company's "Coast Line" in the City of Burbank.

A public hearing was held in this matter on April 19, 1926, at Los Angeles, at which time the matter was submitted.

Victory Place is a proposed new highway, which, in effect, is an extension of San Fernando Road along the westerly side of Southern Pacific Company's right of way, from the present crossing of San Fernando Road with Southern Pacific Company's track, in the northwesterly portion of Burbank, commonly referred to as the "Turkey Crossing," southerly to a connection with Burbank Boulevard (Central Avenue) and Victory Place, in the City of Burbank, this extension being a little less than two-thirds of a

mile in length. It appears that the right of way for this proposed new highway has for the greater part been secured. The width varies from 50 to 80 feet; in the vicinity of the proposed crossing the width is 80 feet.

The Southern Pacific Company's "Coast Line" is an important high-speed railroad and is single-track at the proposed crossing. There are normally fourteen (14) passenger train and eight (8) freight train movements over this line per day. The profile map accompanying the application shows that the track in the vicinity of the proposed crossing is constructed about five (5) feet above the natural ground level, and that the construction of the grade crossing would require the establishment of a fill of about eight (8) feet for a short distance on each side of the track. Evidently the material for the present railroad fill was obtained from borrow pits along each side of the track.

Here we have for consideration the establishment of a grade crossing between an important high-speed railroad and a proposed highway which, if constructed, will very evidently be a major highway artery if the Victory Boulevard and other connecting highway arteries are constructed through to Los Angeles along the westerly side of the Southern Pacific Railroad. All admit that this crossing will, if the present plans for highway construction in this vicinity are carried out, justify a grade separation in the near future. It is very evident that the most practical way of effecting a grade separation at this point is by constructing the highway under the railroad. Applicant's contention for a grade crossing at this time is based on the theory that there is not, at present, money available to defray the expense of a grade separation. To carry out applicant's plan of constructing a temporary grade crossing now, to be replaced with a grade separation within a short time, would add a substantial sum to the cost of

effecting the grade separation, as such a procedure would not only involve the expense of making the necessary fills and paving the highway adjacent to the railroad, but would also add to the total cost of the separation the expense of removing the fills and pavements in order to construct the grades of approach for the grade separation. The item of property damage would undoubtedly be greater if a temporary grade crossing were constructed to be later replaced with a grade separation, than if a grade separation were constructed at the time the highway was opened. The construction of Victory Place is an important improvement and is a necessary part of the highway program proposed to relieve traffic congestion and to eliminate dangerous grade crossings in this district.

Commission's Exhibit No. 1, in this proceeding, shows the result of a study of all the grade crossings over Southern Pacific tracks between Dayton Avenue in Los Angeles and San Fernando Road (Turkey Crossing) in Burbank, looking toward the elimination of all grade crossings, made in connection with Case No. 2171. This report recommends that Victory Place and Burbank Boulevard, respectively, be reconstructed under the railroad tracks, the two separations to be carried out simultaneously; also that when Victory Place is constructed along the westerly side of the railroad, as proposed, and a new highway is constructed along the easterly side of the railroad from Burbank northerly toward San Fernando, for which Fourth Street has been suggested, that the so-called "Turkey Crossing" be closed. This report recommends that this work be carried out within a period of three (3) years.

From the evidence, it appears that it would be unwise to establish a grade crossing of such a potentially important highway over an important high-speed railroad, when it is so evident that the traffic on this street, when opened, will justify the expense

of establishing a grade separation. This feature, considered in conjunction with the fact that the construction of a temporary grade crossing soon to be replaced with a grade separation, involves an unnecessary expenditure of money, and leads to the conclusion that this application should be denied. However, it appears proper to state, at this time, that I would recommend the approval of an application for a grade separation at this location, if such an application were presented to the Commission for consideration.

The following form of order is recommended:

O R D E R

Hearing having been held on the above entitled application and the matter now standing submitted and ready for decision, for reasons set forth in the foregoing Opinion,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the above entitled application be and the same is hereby denied.

The foregoing Opinion and Order are hereby approved and ordered filed as the Opinion and Order of the Railroad Commission of the State of California.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this _____ day of May, 1926.

H. B. Brundage

C. C. C. C.

Leon Whitwell

Commissioners.