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Decision No. \_\_\_\_\_

ORIGINAL

41122

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA.

In the matter of the application of the City of El Centro for permission to construct street crossing at grade across tracks of Southern Pacific Company.

## Application

No. 2694.

J. L. Larew for applicant.  
George D. Squires for Southern  
Pacific Company.

BY THE COMMISSION.

## O P I N I O N

This application was heard by Examiner Encell  
at El Centro on February 7, 1917.

The City of El Centro asks permission herein to construct Broadway, an east and west street eighty feet in width, which lies between and parallel to Main Street and Commercial Avenue, at grade over the tracks of Southern Pacific Company. Commercial Avenue is

three hundred feet north of Broadway, Main Street is the same distance to the south; both are eighty foot streets open across the tracks and are connected with Broadway by Third Street, six hundred feet east of the railroad right-of-way, and Fourth Street two hundred feet west. Main Street is the principal east and west street through the business section of El Centro and is well improved.

The right-of-way of the Southern Pacific Company at Broadway is three hundred feet in width. It runs through El Centro in an approximate north and south direction, and has, in addition to the main line track, four spur tracks, a passing track and a siding across Broadway; making seven tracks in all.

The city bases its desire for the proposed crossing on two general grounds - first, that it is needed to give convenient access to the two industries located on Broadway east of the track, and the second being that its opening would permit traffic to be diverted from Main Street, which, it is stated, is now congested at certain times of the year.

The Southern Pacific opposes the opening of the crossing, alleging that it would be hazardous to street traffic, would be blocked during a large part of the time and would so divide the El Centro yard that the company's facilities would be cramped to such an extent that it would be difficult to handle the El Centro business.

To take the Southern Pacific Company's ob-

jections first, it is apparent that any crossing over several tracks would be dangerous even with the most efficient means of protection, and that it would be more than usually dangerous here, where the seven tracks are so spaced that two are on the extreme west side of the right-of-way, one on the extreme east line three hundred feet away, and four are in the center of the station reservation. This is especially so since the train movements over these tracks are extensive. They consist of four passenger trains daily, three regular freight trains, with occasionally extra trains and switching in the yards estimated as being carried on from seven to eight hours out of the twenty-four. In addition to this train service of the Southern Pacific Company the Holton Interurban Railroad operates several trains daily across this street.

If the crossing is opened it is clear that with but three hundred feet between it and the next adjacent streets, in both directions, the necessary switching would inevitably block the street for considerable periods each day and it seems probable that the train service will be increased in the near future. The San Diego and Arizona Railway, when it is completed, will use the station facilities of the Southern Pacific Company between Main Street and Commercial Avenue, which will mean that its trains will also have to cross Broadway. Further than this it appears that there will have to be new tracks construct-

ed to permit of the interchange of freight between these two companies and this, in addition to the natural increase of the Southern Pacific Company's own facilities, which will be necessary to serve an active and growing city like El Centro, indicates that considerable additional trackage and additional train service will be needed. The best interests of both the railroad and the city will not be served by permitting the railroad facilities to become congested if it can in any way be avoided.

The two reasons advanced by the city for opening the crossing seem to be inadequate to offset the danger to the public and the interference of the track facilities of the railroad which would follow. The representatives of the two industries located on Broadway east of the track testified at the hearing. While one of them is undoubtedly put to some inconvenience, it appears that the principal inconvenience suffered by the other is occasioned by the dust which arises from a temporary road between Main Street and Broadway on the east side of the railroad's right-of-way.

While it is possible that during certain seasons of the year there may be congestion at the Main Street crossing, the evidence is not convincing that it is of sufficient importance to require the opening of a new crossing which would be difficult to protect, and exceedingly dangerous unless protected, to relieve it, especially since it appears probable

that both this congestion and the inconvenience suffered by the industries east of the track would to a large extent be eliminated by the improvement of adjacent cross streets and the streets leading to other crossings.

O R D E R

CITY OF EL CENTRO having applied to the Commission for permission to construct Broadway at grade over the tracks of Southern Pacific Company,

And a public hearing having been held and it appearing that public necessity and convenience do not at this time require a crossing at Broadway,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that this application be, and the same is hereby, denied.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 21st day of February, 1917.

Max Thelen  
H. H. Howard

Francis R. Durbin

Commissioners