

5-10-20

ORIGINAL

Decision No. 7829

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA.

CITY OF SACRAMENTO,
 a municipal corporation,
 Complainant,
 vs.
 SOUTHERN PACIFIC COMPANY,
 a corporation,
 Defendant.

Case No. 1430.

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Archibald Yell for City of Sacramento.
 Geo. J. Bradley for Consolidated Chamber of Commerce.
 Senator J. M. Inman for Sixteenth St. Imp. Club.
 C. F. Weiland for Sacramento Pipe Works.
 Elmer Westlake for Southern Pacific Company.

BY THE COMMISSION.

O P I N I O N

In this proceeding, filed March 23, 1920, the City of Sacramento complains of the dangerous and congested traffic conditions in the subway which crosses the Southern Pacific lines at Twelfth and B Streets, in said City, and over that section of the highway between the subway and the American River bridge north of the City. The greater portion of the last mentioned road lies outside of the City. The City further alleges that Sixteenth Street, which runs parallel with Twelfth Street, crossing the Southern Pacific Company's tracks at B Street at grade, and which runs in a direct line to the American River bridge, is very dangerous on account of the large amount of travel over the grade crossing which is located on a high fill. In order to relieve the Twelfth Street subway and eliminate the present grade crossing at

Sixteenth Street, the City of Sacramento petitions the Railroad Commission for an order authorizing the construction of a subway at Sixteenth Street and B Street upon such terms as the Commission may consider equitable and proper.

The Southern Pacific Company in its answer denies all of the allegations in the City's complaint and asks that the complaint be dismissed. A public hearing was held at Sacramento on June 4th, before Examiner Satterwhite, at which all those interested were represented.

The Twelfth Street subway is the outlet from Sacramento for practically all of the traffic for the region north and east of Sacramento over the highways known as the Natomas Road, Marysville Road and Auburn Boulevard.

North Sacramento, a suburb of from 2500 to 3000 inhabitants, and Del Paso Park are reached by the last named road. The Marysville Road and Auburn Boulevard meet at a point about seven hundred (700) feet northeast of the American River Bridge; the Natomas Road joins the Marysville Road about two thousand seven hundred and fifty (2750) feet north of this intersection. Over two thousand (2000) feet of these approaches from the north to the American River Bridge are on a high wooden trestle about sixteen (16) feet in width. The American River Bridge is about six (6) or seven (7) hundred feet long and about twenty-two (22) feet in width, with a sidewalk about four (4) feet wide on one side, in addition. The distance between the south end of the American River Bridge and the Twelfth Street subway is approximately four thousand six hundred (4600) feet.

The Twelfth Street subway is built with two barrels or sections on account of the shallow floor required to give sufficient overhead clearance. The net width in the clear in each section under the tracks is fourteen (14) feet. The

width between the abutment walls in the open portion of the subway is thirty (30) feet. The length of the covered portion of the subway is about one hundred and sixty (160) feet; the total length of the subway approximately four hundred and fifty (450) feet.

Traffic counts made by the City show 3,658 vehicles passed through the subway from 6 A.M. to 8 P.M. on May 12th, 1920, an average of 254 every hour, or 4.25 per minute through the subway in both directions. On Sunday, May 16th, the city count shows 4,872 vehicles during 14 hours, an average of 348 per hour, or 5.8 per minute in both directions. A count of pedestrians was not offered in evidence by the City.

The Southern Pacific Company offered in evidence counts of traffic in both directions taken on May 20th, 28th^{29th} and Sunday, the 30th, 1920. The results of this count are given in the following table:

May	<u>North Bound</u>				<u>South Bound</u>			
	<u>No. of Hours</u>	<u>Amount Travel</u>	<u>No. Per Hour</u>	<u>No. Per Minute</u>	<u>No. Hours</u>	<u>Amount Travel</u>	<u>No. Per Hour</u>	<u>No. per Minute</u>
20	10	1316	132	2.2	10	1336	134	2.2
28	8	2126	266	4.4	8	1189	148	2.5
29	8	1253	156	2.6	8	1213	139	2.3
	(5	1025	205	3.4	5	769	154	2.6
30	(3	537	179	3.0	3	852	284	4.7
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Av'ge	34	6257	183	3.0	34	5359	158	2.6

The highest count for any one-half hour by the Southern Pacific Company gives only six vehicles per minute or one every^{ten} seconds, which can easily be taken care of by the subway.

A count taken by the Sixteenth Street Improvement Club on July 15, 1916, shows 1524 vehicles and pedestrians from 1 P.M. to 9 P.M., or 8 hours. A tally on July 16th gives 1631 vehicles and pedestrians, etc., from 8 A.M. to 9 P.M., or 13 hours. This

count shows that traffic has not greatly increased on the average in 1920 over 1916.

Analysis of the evidence shows that the entire distance from the south end of the subway to the north end of the highway trestles is a throat through which all of this traffic must pass. The physical measurements show that the wooden trestles, rather than the subway and the intervening roadway, determine the traffic congestion. Diverting part of the traffic over Sixteenth Street at its junction with the Twelfth Street road would not help matters on the trestle or American River Bridge. The only objection that can be offered at the present time to the subway at Twelfth Street is the lack of facilities for travelers on foot. They are now forced to use the vehicular runways, each of which have, according to the traffic counts, a vehicle about every ten to twenty seconds. The Southern Pacific Company and the City of Sacramento should see that the pedestrians are properly safeguarded by the installation of approach sidewalks and a pedestrian subway.

Further testimony was offered by the City as to the necessity of a subway at Sixteenth Street on the basis of danger at the existing grade-crossing and the installation in the near future of several industrial plants along Sixteenth Street between B Street levees and the American River.

Inspection shows that the Sixteenth and B Street crossing while on a high fill has wide approaches with reasonable grades, considering the height of the fill. These approaches and the crossing itself are in good condition for earth roads. The view of the track from the approaches is fairly open. The willow trees on the block northeast of the crossing could easily be removed which would make the view even more open.

The City of Sacramento obtained a traffic count of 99 vehicles over this crossing in 14 hours on May 12th. This amounts to a trifle over seven vehicles an hour, or one every eight and a half minutes. During the same 14-hour interval, 107 train and switch movements passed over the crossing, or one about every seven and three quarter minutes. This tally shows not quite one vehicle for every train crossing Sixteenth Street. There is a very small probability that each traveler would meet one of the trains over the crossing. This light travel would not warrant a grade separation if considered alone.

Witness

-/for the City of Sacramento testified that the industrial area of Sacramento, which is fixed by Ordinance No. 408, is being outgrown and that the best remaining site for industrial purposes is the land lying between the B Street levee and the American River. At the present time this land is bare and unimproved as to streets. The lack of improvement of A Street, North B Street and Sixteenth Street north of the levee probably holds this industrial development in check more than the lack of^a subway at Sixteenth Street, as motor trucks can easily negotiate the existing grades on this crossing. The improvement of these streets would allow of an outlet through the Twelfth Street subway, which can still handle all of the traffic which might originate in this section.

It is the intention of the Southern Pacific Company to extend its yard tracks as far east as the Northern Electric tracks between Eighteenth and Nineteenth Streets. Provisions for these tracks would have to be made in the design of the Sixteenth St. Subway.

The Southern Pacific Company estimates the cost of the subway at the present time with the increased trackage taken into

account at approximately \$125,000. This estimate appears to be about \$12,000 too high, according to the Commission's Engineering Department. A similar estimate for prices current in 1916 would show a cost of only \$64,000, which checks closely the City's estimate in a former proceeding (Case No. 946).

Without the allowance for the increased trackage, we are informed that the estimated cost of the subway by the Railroad Company is placed at between \$50,000 and \$60,000 at the present time. Under fairly normal conditions, this cost would be decreased in proportion to less than \$30,000. In view of the greatly increased estimated cost of this structure in 1920, as compared to the estimated costs of 1916, it might be well to hold in abeyance the construction of an additional subway for north-bound traffic until costs have declined somewhat, as traffic conditions are not now such as to demand the immediate construction of this grade separation. Another objection to the location of a subway at Sixteenth Street might be offered in its lying so close to the Twelfth Street subway. It would seem wiser to space the grade separations more than four blocks apart.

From the evidence it would appear that this complaint should be dismissed.

O R D E R

Complaint having been made by the City of Sacramento against the Southern Pacific Company, a corporation, in regard to traffic conditions through the Twelfth Street Subway and the grade crossing at Sixteenth Street, a public hearing having been

held and the Commission being fully apprised in the premises and of the opinion that the complaint should be dismissed,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the above entitled complaint be and the same is hereby dismissed, without prejudice.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 9th day of July, 1920.

A. H. Ireland
Frank Owen
H. B. Bondage

Commissioners.