

Decision No. 23354

BEFORE THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application of)
the City of Holtville for an order)
authorizing the construction of certain)
crossings of certain drill and spur) Application No. 23354
tracks of the Holton Interurban Railway)
Company by Orange Avenue in said City)
of Holtville.)

ORIGINAL

D. B. ROBERTS, City Attorney, for applicant.
E. L. H. BISSINGER, for Southern Pacific Company.

CRAEMER, COMMISSIONER:

O P I N I O N

In this application the City of Holtville requests permission to construct Orange Avenue at grade across the tracks of the Holton Interurban Railway Company in Holtville.

A public hearing was held in this matter on October 11, 1940, at which time the matter was submitted for determination.

The streets of Holtville are laid out in north, south, east, and west directions, the numbered streets running east and west, and the named avenues running north and south. Fifth Street is the main east and west artery which connects with the main highway to El Centro on the west and Yuma, Arizona, on the east. Fourth Street is located one block south of Fifth Street.

The Holton Interurban Railway runs east and west through the city, in the tier of blocks between Fourth and Fifth Streets.

In the vicinity of the proposed crossing there now exists a crossing at grade of Holt Avenue, two blocks west thereof, and crossings at Walnut and Maple Avenues one and two blocks, respectively, east of Orange Avenue. Holt Avenue is a main north and south

street connecting with the State highway to the north.

Adjacent to Orange Avenue are located numerous packing houses at which various types of farm produce are packed for shipment by the railroad. Immediately south of Fourth Street and west of Orange Street is a wye track of the railroad where one packing house is now located and another one is about to be constructed.

Applicant contends that the existing crossings at Walnut and Holt Avenues are not so located as to properly take care of truck movements to and from these various packing houses and that the opening of Orange Avenue is necessary for the free circulation of these trucks. The record clearly indicates that during the packing season, which lasts only part of the year, several hundred trucks per day bring produce to these packing houses. These trucks, when coming from the north, must either pass along Holt Avenue through the heart of the city or along Walnut Avenue. The use of Orange Avenue would materially reduce the congestion at both Holt and Walnut Avenues which are largely used by highway traffic.

At the point of the proposed crossing five tracks are involved, all of which are used for switching. The dead end of these tracks is approximately two blocks east of Orange Avenue. The regular trains are usually made up in the vicinity of Holt Avenue.

The record shows that for about six months of the year produce is shipped from these packing houses, during which time the railroad operates from one to four trains per day to El Centro. During the remainder of the year only from two to four trains are operated per week. Likewise during this off period very few trucks are in operation to and from these packing houses.

The record discloses that to construct a crossing over the five tracks at Orange Avenue would necessitate a cost of around \$3,000, which applicant states it is willing to bear.

A review of the record in this proceeding leads me to the conclusion that the installation of a crossing at grade at Orange Avenue would facilitate the operation of trucks, particularly from the north, during the produce season, and would improve the routing as it would eliminate two turns; in other words, a truck would come along Fifth Street to Orange and then turn directly south to the packing house area, whereas at the present time a turn is necessary at Fifth and Walnut Streets, a second turn at Fourth and Walnut streets, and a third one at Fourth and Orange. During the off season, however, very little use would be made of the crossing.

It furthermore appears that vehicles are blocked by switching movements at Walnut Avenue, and the opening of Orange Avenue would relieve this situation. However, there will also be times when the Orange Avenue crossing is blocked.

It is concluded that public convenience and necessity require the opening of Orange Avenue and that the application should be granted. The following form of order is recommended.

O R D E R

A public hearing having been held, the matter having been submitted, and being now ready for decision

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the City Council of the City of Holtville is hereby authorized to construct Orange Avenue at grade across the tracks of Holton Interurban Railway Company at the location described in the application and as shown by the maps (Exhibits A and B) attached thereto, subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The above crossing of Orange Avenue shall be identified as Crossing No. 49-709.45.
- (2) The entire expense of construction shall be borne by applicant. The cost of maintaining that portion of said crossing outside of lines two feet outside of

the outside rails shall be borne by applicant. The maintenance of that portion of the crossing between lines 2 feet outside of the outside rails shall be borne by Holton Interurban Railway Company.

- (3) The crossing shall be constructed of a width not less than 24 feet and at an angle of 90 degrees to the railroad with grades of approach not greater than three per cent; shall be constructed equal or superior to the type shown as Standard No. 2 in our General Order No. 72; shall be protected by two Standard No. 1 crossing signs, as specified in our General Order No. 75-B; and shall in every way be made suitable for the passage thereover of vehicles and other road traffic.
- (4) Applicant shall within thirty (30) days thereafter notify this Commission, in writing, of the completion of the installation of said crossing and of its compliance with the conditions hereof.
- (5) The authorization herein granted shall lapse and become void if not exercised within one (1) year from the date hereof, unless further time is granted by subsequent order.
- (6) The Commission reserves the right to make such further order, relative to the location, construction, operation, maintenance, and protection of said crossing as to it may seem right and proper, and to revoke its permission if, in its judgment, public convenience and necessity demand such action.

The authority herein granted shall become effective twenty days from the date hereof.

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 29th day of October, 1940.

Ray L. Rice
State Rail
Robert G. ...
Arthur J. ...
Commissioners.