

ORIGINAL

Decision No. 52438

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Application of the City of Compton for authority to construct Myrrh Street Crossing over tracks of Southern Pacific Railroad Company, Harbor Line in the City of Compton, California.	} } } } }	Application No. 36631
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James G. Butler, City Attorney for City of Compton, applicant; E. D. Yeoman and Walt A. Steiger for Southern Pacific Company, protestant; Representative Clyde Doyle; William E. Cundall for the Traffic Committee of Compton Chamber of Commerce, interested parties; and H. F. Christenson of the Commission staff.

O P I N I O N

Applicant seeks authority to construct a grade crossing at the intersection of Myrrh Street and Alameda Street over the main line track and two side tracks of the San Pedro and Long Beach Branch of the Southern Pacific Company. At said intersection the railroad right of way lies between the east and west roadways of Alameda Street.

A public hearing was held in Compton before Examiner Mark V. Chiesa. Oral and documentary evidence having been adduced, the matter was submitted for decision.

The evidence of record shows that the City of Compton is one of the fastest growing communities in the State and that, because of numerous industrial, commercial and residential developments which are served by the main traffic arteries traversing the city, it is experiencing new and increasing traffic problems, particularly pertaining to crosstown automobile traffic in an easterly and westerly direction.

The main portion of the City of Compton is bounded, generally, by Rosecrans Avenue on the north, the Los Angeles River

on the east, Greenleaf Drive on the south, and Central Avenue on the west. The major east-west traffic arteries are (north to south) Rosecrans Avenue, Compton Boulevard and Olive Street. Said arteries are at half-mile intervals. One of the principal north-south traffic arteries is Alameda Street which borders the Southern Pacific Company's right of way through the City of Compton. The approximate geographical center of the city, and a principal business area, is located near the intersection of Compton Boulevard and Alameda Street.

Myrrh Street is parallel with and approximately 1,320 feet (1/4 mile) south of Compton Boulevard and midway between Compton Boulevard and Olive Street. The west roadway of Alameda Street is a major County artery 58 feet in width. Between Compton Boulevard and Olive Street, Alameda Street is also open on the east side of and parallel with the railroad right of way. The east roadway of Alameda Street is 50 feet in width and at present is not adapted for through north-south traffic.

Between and including the intersections of Rosecrans Avenue and Alameda Street, on the north, and Olive Street and Alameda Street, on the south, a distance of approximately one mile, there are six grade crossings over the aforementioned branch line of the Southern Pacific Company. The names of the streets where the crossings are located, including the proposed crossing at Myrrh Street, and the approximate distances between crossings, are as follows:

<u>Crossing</u>	<u>Distance Between Crossings</u>
Rosecrans Avenue	1/3 mile
Elm Street	1/3 mile
Palmer Avenue	1/3 mile
Compton Boulevard	700 feet along east roadway of Alameda
Laurel Street	920 feet along west roadway of Alameda
	620 feet along east roadway of Alameda
	400 feet along west roadway of Alameda
Myrrh Street	1/4 mile
Olive Street	

The evidence shows that the grade crossing at Laurel Street has an offset of 220 feet between the center line of Laurel Street west of the railroad right of way and the center line of Laurel Street east of said right of way. Laurel Street, measured along the east roadway of Alameda Street, is approximately 700 feet south of Compton Boulevard and approximately 620 feet north of the proposed crossing at Myrrh Street. Measured along the west roadway of Alameda Street, Laurel Street is approximately 920 feet south of Compton Boulevard and approximately 400 feet north of Myrrh Street.

At present Laurel Street crossing is used principally as an accessory means of travel to and from business establishments situated along and near Compton Boulevard between Willowbrook Avenue and Long Beach Boulevard, a distance of approximately 3/4 mile.

The record shows that Laurel Street is not adaptable for crosstown traffic due to the said offset grade crossing at Alameda Street and because the street terminals are at Long Beach Boulevard on the east and approximately at Barron Street on the west, a total distance of about one mile. Myrrh Street, on the other hand, would provide a necessary and more convenient secondary crosstown artery for a greater number of persons, including some that are now using the Laurel Street crossing:

The record is clear that the construction of a crossing at Myrrh Street would be in the public interest, and we so find. Twelve witnesses, representing the City, County, local businesses and schools testified in support of applicant's proposal. There were no protests except that the Southern Pacific Company objected to the retention of the Laurel Street crossing in the event that this Commission authorized the opening of Myrrh Street. The railroad's position was based on the proximity of Laurel Street to Compton Boulevard and to Myrrh Street, the attendant danger due to the offset crossing at Laurel Street and heavy travel along Alameda Street, and because the irregular spacing resulting from the retention of the Laurel crossing would prevent the use of progressive traffic signals.

Exhibit No. 3 shows that during a twenty-four hour period, September 26-27, 1955, 5,540 vehicles used the Laurel Street crossing. During the 7:30 - 8:30 a.m. and the afternoon 4:45 - 5:45 p.m. peak hours, 523 and 713 vehicles, respectively, used said crossing. No check of origin or destination of said vehicles was made. However, the evidence indicates that many vehicles using this crossing would be conveniently accommodated by use of the Myrrh Street crossing.

The Southern Pacific Company operates an average of eight trains daily and "some switching" at Laurel Street and Myrrh Street. It has offered to grant to the City of Compton an easement for a crossing at Myrrh Street and to provide the necessary flashing light signals if the Laurel Street crossing is eliminated.

The Commission having considered the evidence, is of the opinion and finds that public convenience and necessity require the construction of Myrrh Street at grade across the San Pedro Branch of the Southern Pacific Company, and that it is not in the general public interest to retain the present crossing at Laurel Street.

The Laurel Street crossing, because of the offset condition and the necessity of crossing the two roadways of Alameda Street and the Southern Pacific Company tracks, is a potentially dangerous crossing. The proximity and irregular spacing of the crossings at Compton Boulevard, Laurel Street and Myrrh Street would work against a smooth flow of traffic along Alameda Street and prevent a satisfactory progression of signals. Obviously some now using the Laurel Street crossing will be inconvenienced by its closing, but the general public will be better served by the safer crossing at the new location. The Commission will require the crossing changes and improvements as prescribed in the following order.

O R D E R

A public hearing having been held in the above-entitled matter, the Commission being fully advised in the premises, and good cause appearing,

IT IS ORDERED:

(1) That the City of Compton be, and it hereby is, authorized to construct Myrrh Street at grade across the San Pedro Branch of the Southern Pacific Company at the location described in the application, to be identified as Crossing No. BG-494.1. Width of crossing shall be not less than 48 feet and grades of approach not greater than six percent. Construction shall be equal or superior to Standard No. 2 of General Order No. 72. Protection shall be by two Standard No. 8 flashing light signals (General Order No. 75-B). No rail cars shall be spotted within 100 feet of said crossing.

Applicant shall bear entire construction expense, except that Southern Pacific Company shall bear the cost of providing and installing two Standard No. 8 flashing light signals. Applicant shall bear maintenance cost outside of lines two feet outside of

rails. Southern Pacific Company shall bear maintenance cost between such lines.

(2) That prior to the beginning of actual construction of the Myrrh Street Crossing herein authorized, the City of Compton shall file with this Commission an appropriate ordinance or resolution, duly and regularly passed, instituting all necessary steps to legally abandon and effectively close the existing public grade crossing at Laurel Street, identified as Crossing BG-494.0. Upon the completion of the crossing herein authorized and upon its being opened to public use and travel, said Crossing No. BG-494.0 shall be legally abandoned and effectively closed to public use and travel.

(3) That within thirty days after completion pursuant to this Order, applicant shall so advise the Commission in writing.

The authorization herein granted shall become void if not exercised within one year from the effective date of this Order, unless time be extended, or in the event of failure to comply with the above conditions. Authorization may be revoked or modified if public convenience, necessity or safety so require.

The effective date of this Order shall be twenty days after the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 4th day of January, 1956.

[Signature]
President

Justin J. Cravens

Raymond Waterman

[Signature]

[Signature]

Commissioners