

**ORIGINAL**

Decision No. 67526

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Application of City of Compton,  
a Municipal Corporation, to  
construct crossing over the  
Pacific Electric Railway Company's  
Long Beach Line, subject to  
provisions of Sections 1201-1205  
of the Public Utilities Code of  
the State of California. )

) Application No. 45352  
) Filed April 16, 1963  
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Lloyd Bullock, for the City of Compton.  
E. D. Yeomans and Walt A. Steiger, by  
Walt A. Steiger, for Pacific Electric  
Railway Company, protestant.  
John P. Ukleja, for the Commission staff.

O P I N I O N

The City of Compton (City) requests an order authorizing the construction at grade of Palmer Street at Mile Post No. 6L-10.77 across the tracks and right of way of Pacific Electric Railway Company (Pacific Electric) in the City. The line involved is Pacific Electric's Los Angeles to Long Beach main line.

A public hearing was held in Los Angeles before Examiner Rogers on February 13, 1964. Evidence was presented and the matter was submitted.

The City desires to open Palmer Street as a secondary highway, with a width of 64 feet, between Alameda Street on the east and Acacia Avenue on the west, a distance of approximately 1650 feet. At present, Palmer Street is 60 feet in width and extends from approximately Long Beach Boulevard, west to Alameda Street. Directly opposite the end of

said portion of Palmer Street and extending west from Alameda Street there is a deadend street, known as Carson Place, which is approximately 25 feet in width and 170 feet in length. Commencing at a point approximately 200 feet south of Carson Place, another portion of Palmer Street 30 feet in width extends west from Alameda Street two blocks, crossing Tamarind Avenue, a north-south street, to the eastern roadway of Willowbrook Avenue which is 35 feet in width including sidewalks, and is a one-way street for northbound vehicles between Compton Boulevard on the south and Rosecrans Avenue on the north, a distance of approximately 2500 feet. The west roadway of Willowbrook Avenue is identical to and parallel with the east roadway. The intervening space is approximately 129 feet in width and is owned by and used by Pacific Electric as hereinafter explained. Palmer Street, 30 feet in width, also runs west from Acacia Street, which is two blocks or approximately 570 feet west of the west roadway of Willowbrook Avenue, to Wilmington Avenue.

The only street crossing the Pacific Electric property between Rosecrans Avenue and Compton Boulevard is Elm Street, a 29-foot roadway, 1600 feet north of Compton Boulevard or 900 feet south of Rosecrans Avenue. Elm Street also extends from Long Beach Boulevard to Wilmington Avenue.

The City plans, upon authorization from this Commission, to extend Palmer Street from Alameda Street on the east to Acacia Avenue on the west as a 64-foot roadway with an 80-foot right of way. Palmer Street is to extend from Alameda Street and Carson Place on a curve to the south across existing Palmer Street along School Street, to be widened and renamed Palmer Street, to Acacia Avenue, two blocks west of Willowbrook Avenue.

A new market, named Boy's Market, has been opened in the

past year, immediately east of Willowbrook Avenue and north of the existing Palmer Street. In addition, the City is developing a new shopping center area to include the Boy's Market in the area immediately north of said market and east of Willowbrook Avenue. It is the contention of the City that the opening of Palmer Street, as requested, will provide greater access to various installations in the City including a Department of Motor Vehicles office which is on the northeast corner of Alameda Street and Palmer Street; a municipal park containing a swimming pool which is near the southeast corner of said streets; and a community center which is on Alameda Street south of said park.

Compton Boulevard is the main east-west business street in the City, and is 56 feet from curb to curb. The principal commercial establishments of the City are on Compton Boulevard between Alameda Street and Willowbrook Avenue. Average daily traffic thereon between the named intersections is 14,000 vehicles.

A City police officer in charge of traffic planning made an origin and destination survey for vehicles going from Palmer Street and Alameda Street across Willowbrook Avenue and Compton Boulevard. He said the results of the survey show that 20 per cent of the vehicles using Palmer Street west from Alameda Street proceed via Palmer Street, Tamarind Avenue, and Compton Boulevard across Willowbrook Avenue without stopping for shopping on Compton Boulevard, and that 90 per cent of the vehicles going south on Alameda Street and west on Compton Boulevard cross Willowbrook Avenue without stopping on Compton Boulevard for shopping. It was the officer's contention that opening the proposed crossing at Palmer Street will divert a large portion of the non-stopping traffic from Compton Boulevard to Palmer Street across Willowbrook

Avenue and thence via Acacia Avenue to Compton Boulevard or Palmer Street, thus relieving the congestion in the business district of the City.

There is a depot on Pacific Electric's property at the intersection of Compton Boulevard and Willowbrook Avenue. To the north thereof is a parking area for use of trucks picking up and unloading freight at a team track. Immediately west of this team track parking area is a platform adjacent to the team track which extends from north of the proposed crossing to the team track area. This crossing would go through the north end of said platform and, according to Pacific Electric's witness, would render the platform useless. North of the proposed crossing is an old packing house formerly used for icing cars. This building cannot be used in the present service. The main line from Los Angeles to Long Beach extends through the described area and there is a passing track extending from south of the proposed crossing to immediately south of Elm Street. Said crossing would also require shortening this passing track to a great extent.

During the year 1962, 410 carloads of freight were handled at the Compton station plus some Pacific Electric freight. During the year 1963, there was a total of 404 carloads handled thereat, of which 134 were handled at the platform and the balance was handled from trucks at the team track.

It is the contention of the Pacific Electric that if the street is put through as proposed, the platform must be entirely abandoned and traffic will necessarily have to be handled at some other station. At the present time the line in question handles freight only, and there is an average of 7 round trips per day between

Los Angeles and Long Beach. A majority of these trains run at night. There is one train in each direction, at 9:30 a.m. daily. These trains are scheduled to and do pass by using the passing track in the Compton station. They cross Compton Boulevard at 10 miles per hour and operate at 20 miles per hour on the run. The record does not show whether or not the remaining passing track would be adequate for Pacific Electric requirements if the street is opened, but a witness for Pacific Electric testified that the more crossings there are, the more hazardous the operations are, both for the public and the railroad personnel.

A Commission staff engineer testified that if this crossing is authorized, protection should be installed as follows:

- 1) Install 2 Standard No. 8 flashing light signals (General Order No. 75-B) with extra heads for left turn movements from Willowbrook Avenue (west roadway).
- 2) Install timing-out circuits to prevent unnecessary operation of the automatic crossing protection.
- 3) Install two 20,000 lumen mercury vapor lights.
- 4) Relocate side track switch north of the crossing.

The City stated that it will pay the expenses of improving and opening the crossing.

Upon the evidence herein the Commission finds that:

1. Palmer Street is a public highway in the City of Compton, extending from Long Beach Boulevard to Willowbrook Avenue on the east, and from Acacia Avenue to Wilmington Avenue on the west.
2. Palmer Street does not extend across Pacific Electric's tracks at Willowbrook Avenue.

3. Compton Boulevard crosses Pacific Electric's tracks, 1650 feet south of Elm Street and both of said streets cross said tracks.

4. The City proposes to extend Palmer Street as a 64-foot roadway across the Pacific Electric's right of way to Acacia Avenue at a point approximately 550 feet north of Compton Boulevard and 1100 feet south of Elm Street.

5. The City area north of Palmer Street and south of Elm Street and between Alameda Street and Willowbrook Avenue is zoned as an industrial area, and is presently improved with one supermarket.

6. Compton Boulevard between Willowbrook Avenue and Alameda Street is the principal east-west business street in the City.

7. Opening Palmer Street across the track will help relieve traffic congestion on Compton Boulevard in the City.

8. Opening Palmer Street across the tracks of Pacific Electric will render Pacific Electric's Compton freight loading dock useless and require freight that is handled over the dock to be handled at a different depot; that such traffic amounted to 134 carloads in the year 1963.

9. Opening Palmer Street across the Pacific Electric right of way will increase the danger of accidents to citizens and Pacific Electric's train crews.

10. Public convenience and necessity do not require that

Palmer Street be extended across Willowbrook Avenue, and the Pacific Electric's right of way.

Upon the foregoing findings, the Commission concludes that the application should be denied.

O R D E R

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

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

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 14<sup>th</sup> day of July, 1964.

Frederick B. Hallock  
President

John E. DeWitt

George T. Crowder

William V. Beard

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Commissioners

Commissioner Everett C. McKeage, being necessarily absent, did not participate in the disposition of this proceeding.