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ORIGINAL

Decision No. 74479

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application)
of the CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a)
municipal corporation, to widen)
and improve the De Soto Avenue)
grade crossing of the Southern)
Pacific Company's Burbank Branch)
Line at Victory Boulevard)
(Crossing No. BY-450.3).)

Application No. 50018
(Filed February 15, 1968)

OPINION AND ORDER

The City of Los Angeles seeks authority to widen and improve the De Soto Avenue grade crossing of the Southern Pacific Company's Burbank branch line at Victory Boulevard (Crossing No. BY-450.3). It states that De Soto Avenue is an important transportation route for the movement of people and property between communities in the western portion of the San Fernando Valley; that the volume of traffic along De Soto Avenue at Crossing No. BY-450.3 is now nearing capacity; that the volume is expected to double by 1985; that to meet the needs of the increased traffic in the future, the City of Los Angeles is embarking on a program of widening and improving both De Soto Avenue and Victory Boulevard; that unless Crossing No. BY-450.3 is widened and improved in conjunction with the other improvements to be made in De Soto Avenue and Victory Boulevard, the overall traffic performance at the intersection of these highways will be seriously affected, and that the flow of traffic along De Soto Avenue itself will be critically impeded.

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At present the width of the paved roadway along De Soto Avenue at Crossing No. BY-450.3 is 34 feet.^{1/} The crossing is protected by two Standard No. 8 flashing light signals (General Order No. 75-B). The City of Los Angeles proposes to widen the paved roadway at said crossing to 84 feet, to relocate the two flashing light signals to beyond the curb lines of the widened crossing, to supplement said signals with crossing gates, to install two additional Standard No. 8 flashing light signals, supplemented by crossing gates, on center of street median islands, one on each side of crossing, and to provide advance warning signs, double clearance and railroad RXR pavement markings.

The City of Los Angeles further states that a separation of grade at the railroad crossing of De Soto Avenue is not practicable at this time; that there are other crossings within Los Angeles where public convenience and public safety warrant construction of grade separations as early as funds for the payment of the public share thereof can be obtained; and that a diversion of public funds at this time for the construction of a grade separation at the De Soto Avenue crossing would postpone the construction of more urgently required separations at other crossings.^{2/}

^{1/} The width of the roadway is misstated in the application as being 31 feet.

^{2/} Assertedly, the improvement of the De Soto Avenue crossing is eligible for gasoline tax funds.

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The application states that the City of Los Angeles and the Southern Pacific Company are not in agreement as to the apportionment of the costs of widening and improving the De Soto Avenue grade crossing. By subsequent correspondence (hereby made a part of the record), however, both parties have informed the Commission of their willingness to share equally the costs of the installation and maintenance of protection of the grade crossing.

Upon consideration of the application the Commission finds that:

1. Public safety, convenience and necessity require that the De Soto Avenue crossing of the Southern Pacific Company's branch line at Victory Boulevard (Crossing No. BY-450.3) be widened and improved in order to accommodate the increasing motor vehicular traffic thereon.

2. Public safety, convenience and necessity require that with the widening and improvement of Crossing No. BY-450.3, the crossing be protected by the signals, crossing gates and other warning signs and means which are specified by applicant in this matter.

3. The costs of the installation and maintenance of the grade crossing protection should be apportioned equally between the City of Los Angeles and the Southern Pacific Company.

The Commission concludes that this application should be granted subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the following order. Public hearing thereon is not necessary.

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. The City of Los Angeles is authorized to widen and improve the De Soto Avenue crossing (Crossing No. BY-450.3) of tracks of the Southern Pacific Company in accordance with the plans set forth in Application No. 50018.

2. The width of the paved roadway at said crossing shall be not less than 84 feet, and the grades of approach shall be not greater than three percent. Construction shall be equal or superior to Standard No. 2 of General Order No. 72. There shall be installed at the crossing four Standard No. 8 flashing light signals (General Order No. 75-B). Two of these signals shall be placed at the edge of the pavement and two shall be placed on median islands, one on each side of the crossing. Said signals shall be supplemented by automatic crossing gates. Backlights may be omitted on the signals placed on the medians. There shall also be installed or provided advance warning signs and double clearance and railroad RXR pavement markings.

3. The cost of installing the grade crossing protection shall be apportioned equally between the City of Los Angeles and the Southern Pacific Company.

4. The maintenance cost of the grade crossing protection shall be apportioned equally between the City of Los Angeles and the Southern Pacific Company, pursuant to the provisions of Section 1202.2 of the Public Utilities Code.

5. The Southern Pacific Company shall bear 100 percent of the costs of preparing track necessary within the limits of the widened crossing, and any paving work within lines two feet outside of outside rails in the existing crossing.

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6. The City of Los Angeles shall bear 100 percent of all other costs of widening the crossing and approaches.

7. The Southern Pacific Company shall bear the cost of maintenance of the widened crossing within lines two feet outside of outside rails and the City of Los Angeles shall bear the maintenance costs of the crossing and approaches outside of said lines.

8. Within thirty days after completion of the work herein authorized, the City of Los Angeles and the Southern Pacific Company shall each notify the Commission in writing that said work has been completed.

9. All crossing protection specified in this order shall be fully installed, completed, and placed in operable condition before the widened crossing is fully opened to the public.

10. The improvements and changes herein specified are to be completed within one year of the effective date of this order unless time is extended.

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

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 30th day of JULY, 1968.

William Lyons Jr.
President

William G. Bennett

Fred P. Morrissey
Commissioners

Commissioner Peter E. Mitchell, being necessarily absent, did not participate in the disposition of this proceeding.

Commissioner A. W. Gatov, being necessarily absent, did not participate in the disposition of this proceeding.