

ORIGINAL

Decision No. 77221

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Application of the City of Ukiah, acting through its City Council for permission to construct a crossing at grade on Cherry Street extended across the Northwestern Pacific Railroad in the City of Ukiah.

Application No. 50975
(Filed March 27, 1969)

John D. Wagner, for City of Ukiah, applicant.
Harold S. Lentz, for Northwestern Pacific Railroad Company, respondent.
Donald C. Meany, Counsel, for the Commission staff.

O P I N I O N

By this application the City of Ukiah requests an order authorizing it to construct a crossing at grade, extending Cherry Street across the Northwestern Pacific Railroad's main line.

Public hearing was held before Examiner O'Leary at Ukiah on January 28, 1970.

The proposed crossing would provide a further access road to downtown Ukiah from the area bounded on the south by Talmage Road, on the north by East Gobbi Street, U.S. Highway 101 on the east and the Northwestern Pacific Railroad tracks on the west. The area presently consists of single family dwellings and agricultural property. Future development of the area is to include multiple residential units and light manufacturing sites. The area is approximately 3,000 feet x 1,500 feet, contains 168 structures and has a population of approximately 600 persons. Access to the area is presently gained by use of East Gobbi Street or Talmage Road, both of which cross the tracks of

the railroad and provide access to and from U.S. Highway 101. The City of Ukiah proposes to extend Cherry Street, which presently runs between State Street and the railroad tracks, easterly across the tracks to Betty Street. Said extension would not provide direct access to U.S. Highway 101. The proposed crossing would be located approximately 1,150 feet north of Talmage Road and 1,770 feet south of East Gobbi Street.

Three residents of the area testified in support of the application. They were of the opinion that the opening of the crossing would facilitate access of fire fighting equipment and ambulance vehicles to the area and would also alleviate traffic congestion presently encountered on Talmage Road and East Gobbi Street. One of the three witnesses further stated that although she was in favor of the proposed crossing she would rather the city improved some of the present access roads before constructing the proposed crossing.

The City Manager testified that Talmage Road is a State Highway and that the speed limit is 40 M.P.H. Because of the speed limit it is difficult for persons leaving the area to gain access to Talmage Road.

The City Engineer testified that during August and September, 1969, traffic counts were taken at Talmage Road and the Betty and Lorraine turnoff (the southerly entrance to the area). The August count disclosed an average daily count of 977 vehicles entering or leaving the area and the September count disclosed an average daily count of 1,276 vehicles entering or leaving the area. A traffic count was also taken in August at East Gobbi Street and Waugh Lane (the northerly entrance to the area). Said count disclosed an average daily count of 924 vehicles entering or leaving the area. The counts at both

Locations counted vehicles coming from or going to U.S. Highway 101 as well as those coming or going across the railroad tracks. The City Engineer also testified that the vehicles going to or from the freeway would continue to use the present routes and that only a portion of those coming from or going to the railroad tracks would use the proposed crossing. The City Engineer also testified that he believed the proposed crossing would alleviate traffic problems presently encountered at the intersections of State Street and East Gobbi Street and State Street and Talmage Road.

It was stipulated that there are approximately 13 or 14 train movements per day at the location of the proposed crossing.

An assistant engineer for the railroad testified that during July, 1969, he caused traffic counts for a 16-hour period to be taken at the northerly and southerly entrances to the area. This count taken at the northerly entrance disclosed 584 vehicles coming into the area from or leaving the area toward the railroad tracks. The count taken at the southerly entrance disclosed 692 vehicles coming into the area from or leaving the area toward the railroad tracks.

Based on the evidence adduced the Commission finds that:

1. The area bounded by Talmage Road, East Gobbi Street, U.S. Highway 101 and the Northwestern Pacific Railroad tracks is a residential and agricultural area.
2. The area described in Finding 1 is approximately 3,000 feet by 1,500 feet, contains 168 structures and has an approximate population of 600 persons.
3. Access to the area described can be gained only from Talmage Road or East Gobbi Street.

4. The extension of Cherry Street, across the Northwestern Pacific Railroad tracks would provide a third means of access to the area.

5. Future development of the area is to include multiple residential and light manufacturing sites.

6. The Northwestern Pacific Railroad has approximately 13 to 14 train movements per day across the site of the proposed crossing.

7. The proposed crossing would serve approximately 168 structures and 600 people.

8. Opening of the Cherry Street crossing would on some occasions assist emergency vehicles entering or leaving the area, but the present routes of reaching the area are nearly as fast as if the proposed crossing were open.

9. The proposed crossing is located approximately 1,150 feet north of the crossing at Talmage Road and 1,770 feet of the crossing at East Gobbi Street.

10. The proposed crossing would not provide a direct route from State Street to U.S. Highway 101.

11. Only a portion of the people presently utilizing the crossings at Talmage and East Gobbi Streets would use the proposed crossing.

12. If the proposed crossing were authorized, there would be a total of three crossings across the Northwestern Pacific Railroad tracks within 2,920 feet.

13. Opening of the proposed crossing will create additional hazards for the public and is not warranted by public convenience and safety.

Based on the above findings, the Commission concludes that the application should be denied.

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED that Application No. 50975 is denied.

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

San Francisco

Dated at _____, California, this 19th day of MAY, 1970.

William J. Moore, Jr.
President
August
(P. H. Brown)
Thomas Brown
Yvonne L. Stinson
Commissioners