

ORIGINAL

Decision 89 05 049 MAY 26 1989

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application of the City)
of Coachella to construct Avenue 54, a) Application 88-10-034
public street, across the railroad tracks of) (Filed October 18, 1988)
the Southern Pacific Transportation Company)
in the City of Coachella, County of Riverside.)

O P I N I O N

As part of the project to develop the Coachella Industrial Park and adjacent areas, the City of Coachella (City) requests authority to construct Avenue 54 at grade across the tracks of Southern Pacific Transportation Company's (SPT) main line in Coachella, Riverside County. An existing private at-grade crossing located 600 feet north of Avenue 54 will be closed and physically removed upon opening of the new at-grade crossing.

The proposed crossing is as essential element in providing adequate direct access to and traffic circulation within the industrial, commercial and residential areas to the east. Additionally, the crossing will provide significantly reduced response time for fire and other emergency vehicles to the easterly Coachella city limits. The proposed crossing will be the most direct route to a developing industrial park with a land area in excess of 900 acres and to a master planned community of some 1,100 residences and 45 commercial areas.

City is the lead agency for this project under the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA), as amended, Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seq. After preparation and review of an Initial Study, City issued a Negative Declaration and approved the project. On July 8, 1988, a Notice of Determination was filed with the Riverside County Clerk which found that "The project will not have a significant effect on the environment".

The Commission is a responsible agency for this project under CEQA and has reviewed and considered the lead agency's Initial Study and Negative Declaration.

The site of the proposed crossing of Avenue 54 has been inspected by the Commission's Safety Division Traffic Engineering staff, who, after discussion of the street geometrics and future traffic demands with city and railroad officials recommended the installation of four Standard No. 9 automatic gate-type signals.

City has met the filing requirements of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure including Rule 38, which relates to the construction of public highways across a railroad. Detailed drawings of the crossing protection and street geometrics are attached to Appendix "A".

To improve the riding quality and durability of the crossing, City proposed to install a rubber grade crossing surface, which crossing surface is not included within the standards of the Commission's General Order (GO) 72-B. Since there appears to be ample justification for the installation of a rubber crossing surface in this instance, an exemption from GO 72-B to permit the installation will be granted.

Notice of the Application was published in the Commission's Daily Calendar on October 21, 1988. No protests have been filed. A public hearing is not necessary.

The Commission had previously granted authority to construct the Avenue 54 at-grade crossing by Decision 93551, dated September 15, 1981 in Application 60047. The authority expired and the crossing was never constructed. A new assessment district has been formed by private developers and funds are now available to construct the project.

Findings of Fact

1. City requests authority under Public Utilities (PU) Code Sections 1201-1205 to construct Avenue 54 at grade across SPT's main line tracks in Coachella, Riverside County.

2. Construction of the crossing is required to provide access to and adequate traffic circulation within the new Coachella Industrial Park and adjacent commercial and residential areas.

3. Public convenience and necessity require construction of the Avenue 54 crossing.

4. Public safety requires that protection at the crossing be four Standard No. 9 automatic gate-type signals (General Order (GO) 75-C).

5. The public and the railroad will benefit from installation of a rubber grade crossing surface at the crossing.

6. The grade crossings will be in close proximity to Grapefruit Boulevard; therefore, traffic control signals at the adjacent intersection should be preempted by the approach of on-rail vehicles of SPT.

7. Upon completion and opening to vehicular traffic of Avenue 54 at-grade crossing, the private crossing located 600 feet north of the new crossing shall be closed and physically removed.

8. City is the lead agency for this project under CEQA, as amended.

9. The Commission is a responsible agency for this project and has reviewed and considered the lead agency's Initial Study and Negative Declaration.

10. The crossing project itself will have no significant effect on the environment.

Conclusion of Law

1. The application should be granted as set forth in the following order.

2. An exemption from GO 72-B should be granted to permit the installation of a rubber grade crossing surface at the crossing.

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. The City of Coachella (City) is authorized to construct Avenue 54 at grade across Southern Pacific Transportation Company's (SPT) main line tracks in Coachella, Riverside County, at the location and substantially as shown by plans attached to both the application and this order, to be identified as Crossing B-616.6.

2. Clearances shall conform to GO 26-D. Walkways shall conform to GO 118.

3. Protection at the crossing shall be four Standard No. 9 automatic gate-type signals (GO 75-C).

4. Construction expense of the crossing and installation of the automatic protection shall be borne by City.

5. Maintenance cost of the automatic protection shall be borne by City under PU Code Section 1202.2.

6. Construction plans of the crossing, approved by SPT, together with a copy of the agreement entered into between the parties, shall be filed with the Commission prior to commencing construction.

7. City is granted an exemption from GO 72-B to permit installation of a rubber grade crossing surface at the crossing.

8. Construction of the crossing shall be in accordance with the provisions of GO 72-B except that a rubber grade crossing surface shall be installed at the crossing.

9. Preemption of traffic signals at the adjacent intersection to the grade crossing shall be actuated by the approach of on-rail vehicles of SPT.

10. Upon completion of the Avenue 54 at-grade crossing and its opening to vehicular traffic, the adjacent private crossing located 600 feet north of the new crossing shall be closed and physically removed.

11. Within 30 days after completion of the work under this order, City shall advise the Commission in writing that the authorized work has been completed.

12. This authorization shall expire if not exercised within two years unless time is extended or if the above conditions are not complied with. Authorization may be revoked or modified if public convenience, necessity, or safety so require.

The application is granted as set forth above.

This order becomes effective 30 days from today.

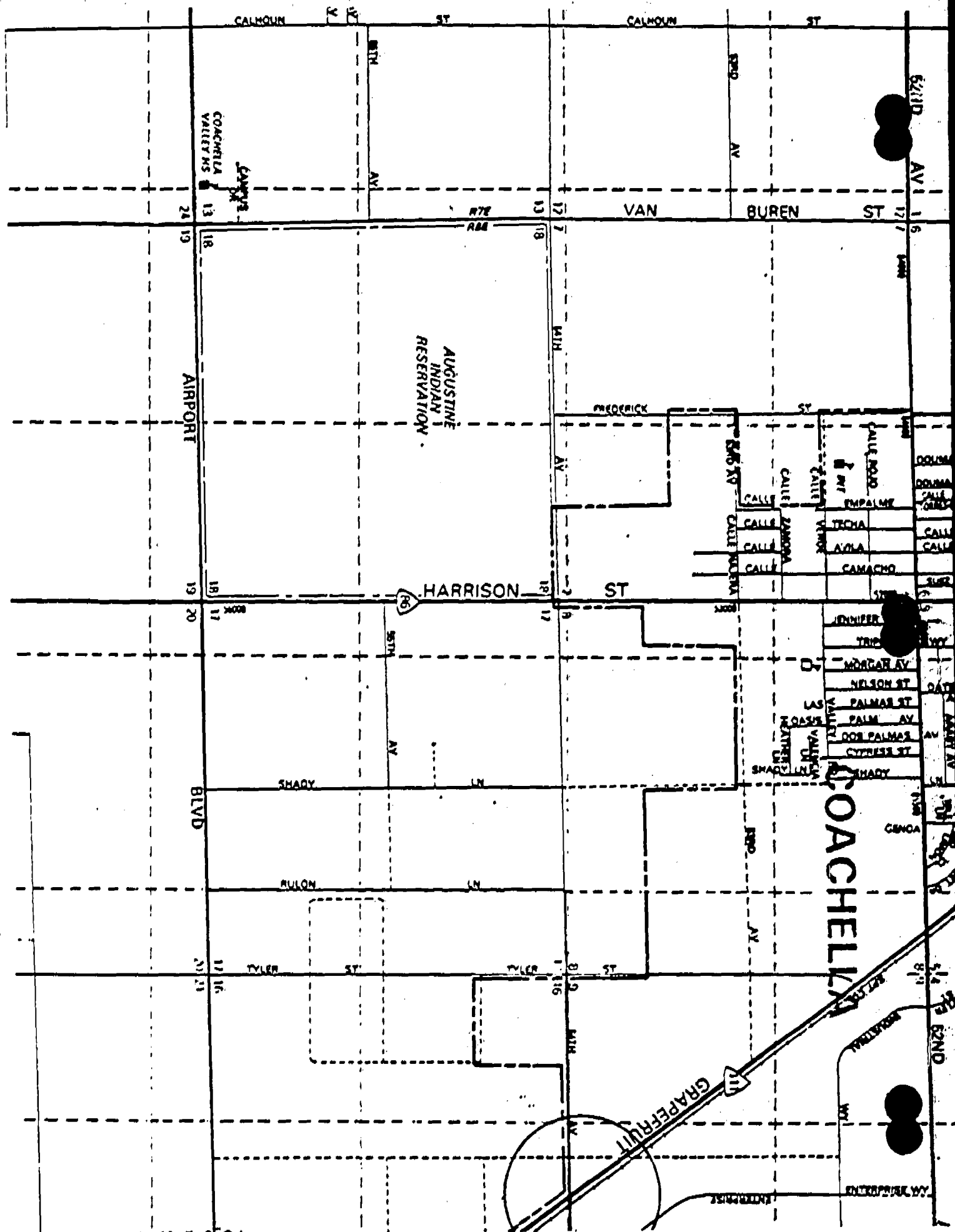
Dated MAY 26 1989, at San Francisco, California.

G. MITCHELL WILK
President
FREDERICK R. DUDA
STANLEY W. HULETT
JOHN B. OHANIAN
PATRICIA M. ECKERT
Commissioners

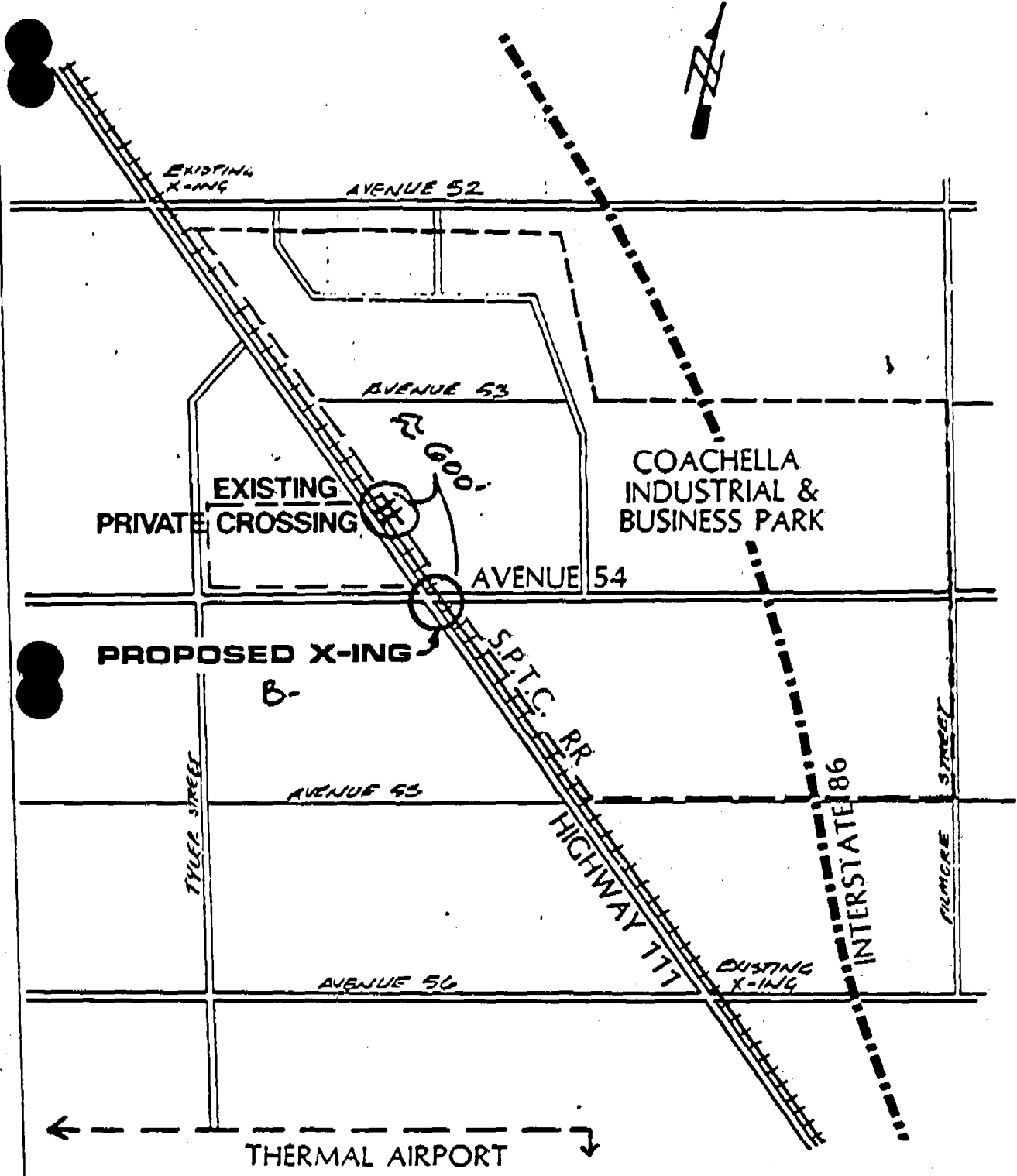
I CERTIFY THAT THIS DECISION
WAS APPROVED BY THE ABOVE
COMMISSIONERS TODAY.



Victor Weisz, Executive Director



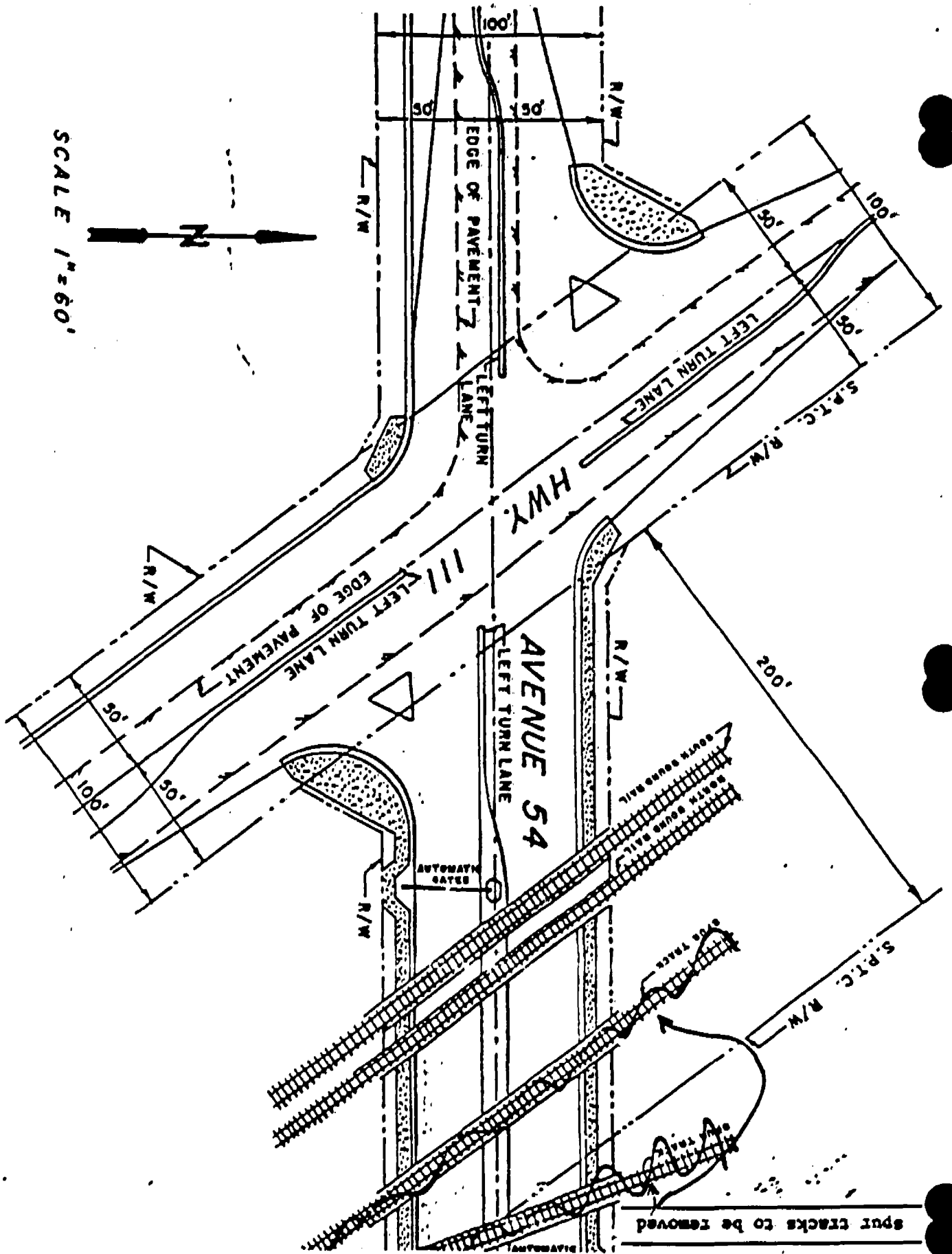
EXISTING PRIVATE CROSSING:
U.S. DOT-AAR Crossing Inventory No. 760 724 S



VICINITY MAP

CITY OF
COACHELLA

SCALE 1"=60'



spur tracks to be removed

ROUGH PROFILE AVE. 54 & S.P.R.R.
THE CITY OF COACHELLA, CA.

