

Decision 92 03 044 MAR 11 1992

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Application of the State of California,
Department of Transportation, for an
order authorizing the Department to:
Construct a crossing at separated
grades to be known as "H Street
Overhead," over the Southern Pacific
Transportation Company's "B" & "BA"
Line. Construction of the overhead
structure is part of a proposed project
to complete the construction of State
Route 180 in the City of Fresno between
post miles R56.2 and R58.4.

ORIGINAL

Application 91-10-044
(Filed October 11, 1991)

O P I N I O N

As part of the State Route 180 (SR-180) project to construct on a new alignment a freeway and expressway between U.S. Route 99 and Chestnut Avenue, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) requests authority to construct SR-180 at separated grades over the tracks of Southern Pacific Transportation Company's (SPT) El Paso Route Main and West Side San Joaquin Valley Main Lines in Fresno, Fresno County.

The two main line tracks are adjacent at the proposed crossing and merge a short distance to the south. The overhead structure will also cross H Street and will be known as the H Street Overhead. Existing SR-180 is a conventional highway, located approximately one mile to the south of the proposed freeway, and will remain in use as a local road.

The 4.8 mile long project is part of a regional transportation network to relieve congestion on existing streets. Major impacts include displacement of residences and businesses, changes in local traffic patterns, decrease in riparian vegetation along several water courses, increase in noise levels, and visual impact. Mitigation measures will include relocation assistance,

habitat replacement or restoration, construction of sound attenuation barriers, and landscaping.

Caltrans 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 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Caltrans approved the project. On November 4, 1977, a Notice of Determination was filed with the Secretary for Resources which found that "The project will have a significant effect on the environment." An environmental reevaluation was prepared and approved on July 7, 1989, and concluded that no new significant impacts existed.

The Commission is a responsible agency for this project under CEQA and has reviewed and considered the lead agency's EIS. The Commission's Safety Division Traffic Engineering staff has inspected the site of the proposed project. After reviewing the need for and safety of the proposed construction, the staff recommends issuance of an ex-parte order authorizing construction of the proposed overcrossing.

The application meets the filing requirements of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, including Rule 38, which relates to the construction of a public highway across a railroad. A sketch of the crossing area is set forth as Appendix A.

Findings of Fact

1. Notice of the application was published in the Commission's Daily Calendar on November 4, 1991. No protests have been received. A public hearing is not necessary.

2. Caltrans requests authority under Public Utilities Code Sections 1201-1205 to construct SR-180 (H Street Overhead) at separated grades over the tracks of SPT's El Paso Route Main and West Side San Joaquin Valley Main Lines in Fresno, Fresno County.

3. Construction of the H Street Overhead is required as part of the construction of realigned SR-180 in the City of Fresno.

4. Public convenience, necessity, and safety require construction of the H Street Overhead.

5. Caltrans is the lead agency for this project under CEQA, as amended.

6. The Commission is a responsible agency for this project and has reviewed and considered the lead agency's EIS.

7. The project will have a significant effect on the environment; however, the adopted mitigation measures will reduce the severity of the adverse impacts to acceptable levels.

Conclusions of Law

1. The application is uncontested, and a public hearing is not necessary.

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

ORDER

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. The State of California, Department of Transportation (Caltrans), is authorized to construct SR-180 (H Street Overhead) at separated grades over the tracks of Southern Pacific Transportation Company's (SPT) EL Paso Route Main and West Side San Joaquin Main Lines in Fresno, Fresno County, at the location and substantially as shown by plans attached to the application, to be identified as Crossings B-204.2-A and BA-207.1-A, respectively.

2. Clearances shall be in accordance with General Order (GO) 26-D, except that during the period of construction of the H Street Overhead a clearance of not less than 22' above top of rail is authorized, and SPT is authorized to operate with such reduced overhead clearance provided the railroad issues instructions (and

files them with the Commission's Safety Division) forbidding employees to ride on tops of cars beneath the structure.

3. Caltrans shall notify the Commission's Safety Division and SPT at least 15, but not more than 30, days in advance of the date when the temporary impaired overhead clearance will be created.

4. Walkways shall conform to GO 118. Walkways adjacent to any trackage subject to rail operations shall be maintained free of obstructions and shall be promptly restored to their original condition in the event of damage during construction.

5. Construction and maintenance costs shall be borne in accordance with an agreement to be entered into between the parties. A copy of the agreement, together with plans of the crossings approved by SPT, shall be filed with the Commission's Safety Division prior to commencing construction. Should the parties fail to agree, the Commission will apportion the costs of construction and maintenance by further order.

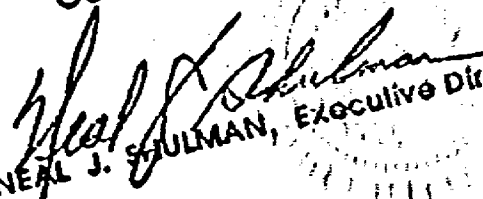
6. Within 30 days after completion of the work under this order, Caltrans shall notify the Commission's Safety Division in writing that the authorized work has been completed.

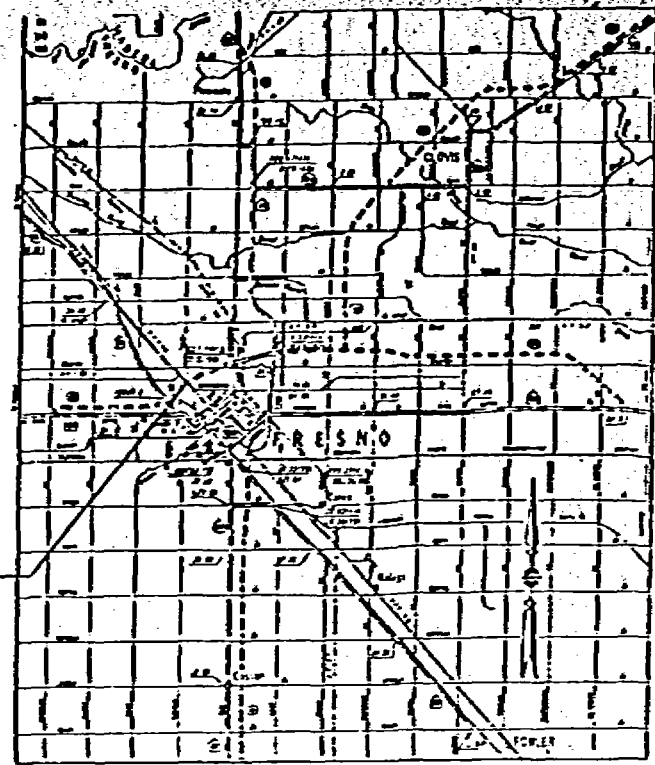
7. This authorization shall expire if not exercised within three years unless time is extended or if the above conditions are not complied with. Authorization may be revoked or modified if public convenience, necessity, or safety so require.

8. The application is granted as set forth above.
This order becomes effective 30 days from today.
Dated MAR 11 1992, at San Francisco, California.

DANIEL Wm. FESSLER
President
JOHN B. CHANIAN
PATRICIA M. ECKERT
NORMAN D. SHUMWAY
Commissioners

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


NEAL J. SHULMAN, Executive Director



NEW BRIDGE AT NEW ROUTE 180 CROSSING
M STREET OVERHEAD
BRNO. 42-314 R/L PM 58.8

VICINITY MAP

