

ORIGINAL

Decision 82 05 015 MAY - 4 1982

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application of )  
the STATE OF CALIFORNIA, DEPARTMENT )  
OF TRANSPORTATION, for an order )  
authorizing the construction of two )  
grade crossings and the relocation )  
of one grade crossing over the )  
Southern Pacific Transportation )  
Company's Dumbarton Cutoff Main Line )  
as part of the reconstruction of the )  
west approaches to the new Dumbarton )  
Bridge in San Mateo County. )

Application 60806  
(Filed August 10, 1981)

Eugene C. Bonnstetter and Jim Livesey, Attorneys  
at Law, for State of California, Department  
of Transportation, applicant.  
Harold S. Lentz, Attorney at Law, for Southern  
Pacific Transportation Company, respondent.  
James P. Jones, for United Transportation Union;  
and Michael A. Bedwell and Lauren Mercer, for  
City of Menlo Park; interested parties.  
Robert W. Stich, for the Commission staff.

O P I N I O N

In connection with the construction of a new Dumbarton  
Bridge of four lanes to replace the old two-lane structure, the  
State of California, Department of Transportation (Caltrans) applies  
for an order authorizing construction of two railroad grade crossings  
and relocation of a third. All three will be on the western (San  
Mateo County) approaches to the bridge.

The proposed construction is in conformance with an agreement  
between Caltrans and the Town of Atherton, Citizens Against the  
Dumbarton Bridge, and the City of Menlo Park.

All three proposed crossings are across the tracks of  
Southern Pacific Transportation Company (SPT) which originally  
protested the application. At the prehearing conference on  
January 7, 1982, SPT withdrew its protest.

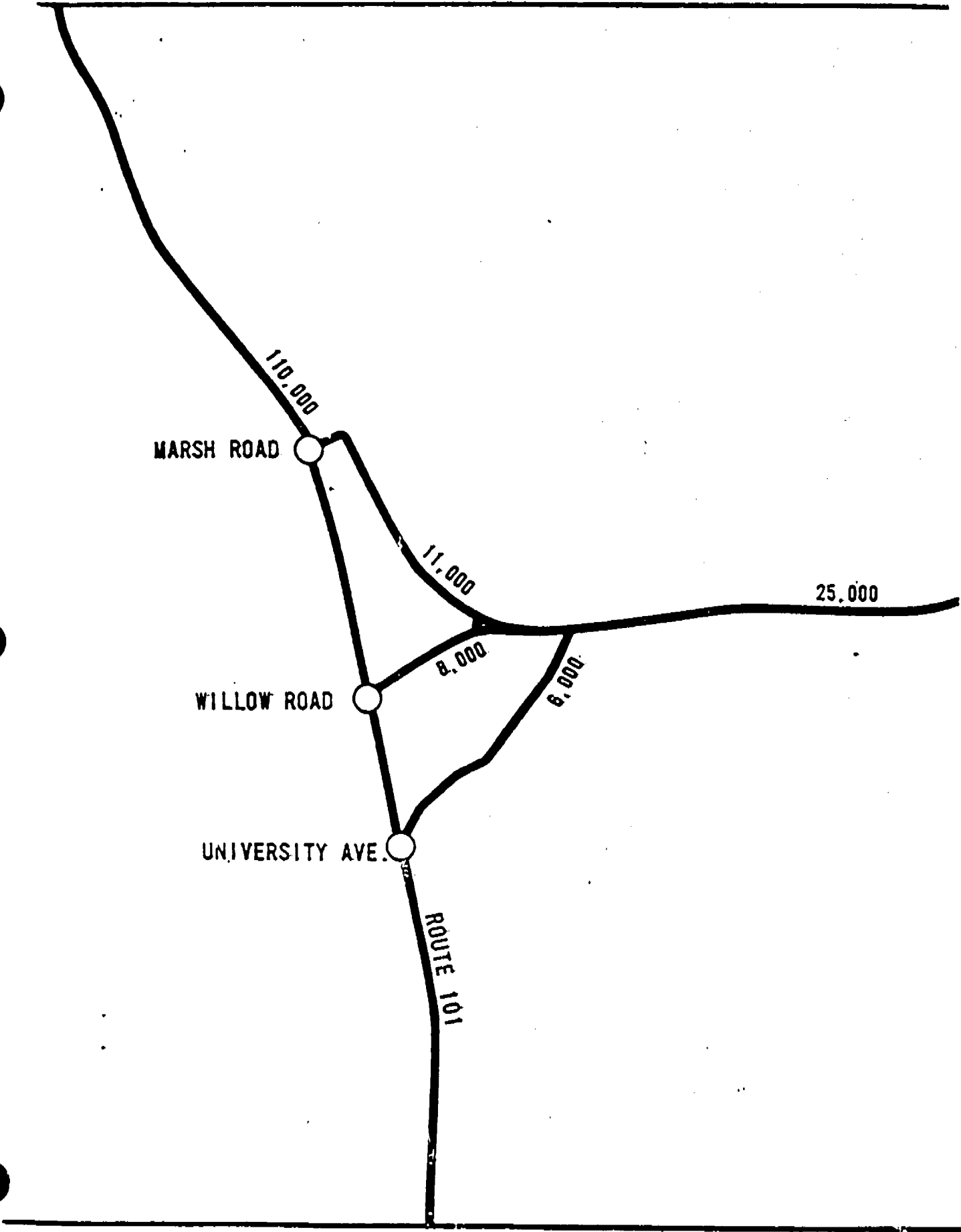
Several other city and county governments and state and federal agencies have been participants in planning for the bridge or its western approaches. All were notified of this proceeding. (See list of persons and organizations on December 9, 1981 letter of Caltrans.) None protested.

The application was therefore submitted at the prehearing conference, subject to the filing of a Caltrans analysis, in letter form, of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the bridge and its approaches as related to the western traffic approaches.

The crossings themselves may be briefly described as follows:

1. Chilco Street crossing near station "BH" 8+35 and railroad milepost 29.5, carrying two-way local traffic.
2. University Avenue grade crossing near station "U" 30+41.613 and railroad milepost 30.8, carrying two-way traffic on a four-lane divided road.
3. Relocation of Willow Road grade crossing at railroad milepost 30.1 due to realignment of Highway 84. This will remain a two-way, two-lane road. (Highway 84 includes the road over the bridge itself.)

The foregoing paragraphs are condensed from the language of the application. To explain less technically what is involved, there are three traffic arteries which connect the Bayshore Freeway (Route 101) with the bridge - Marsh Road, Willow Road, and University Avenue. The first of the two diagrams on the following pages, adapted from exhibits to the application, is a simplified map of the configuration. (The figures are average weekday traffic projections for 1992.) The second diagram illustrates the location of the two new crossings and the relocated crossing.





As can be seen from the second diagram, the University Avenue and Willow Road crossings concern these main arteries, while the Chilco Street crossing connects neighborhood streets with the most northerly (Marsh Road) approach.

Crossing protection proposed is as follows:

Chilco Street: two CPUC Standard No. 9 flashing light signals with automatic gates (General Order 75-C).

University Avenue: two CPUC Standard No. 9-A cantilevered flashing light signals with automatic gates.

Willow Road relocation: two CPUC Standard No. 9-A cantilevered flashing light signals with automatic gates. (Existing protection consists of two CPUC Standard No. 8 flashing light signals).

Specifications provide for the cantilevered signals to be installed at a height of at least 17 feet above the road surface.

Under Commission Rule of Practice and Procedure 17.1, Caltrans is the lead agency for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act. The rule permits the use of a federal EIS when one has been prepared for projects of federal significance. In this instance, the U.S. Department of Transportation (Coast Guard) compiled an extensive final EIS in connection with the Dumbarton Bridge replacement project, dated December 10, 1976. This document (Exhibit 1), running to well over 300 pages, considers traffic patterns, and environmental factors relating to them.

It is clear from a review of the EIS that the new four-lane bridge has a significant effect on the environment, but it is not our province to pass upon the bridge itself, nor are we asked to do so. There are no protests to the railroad grade crossings themselves; therefore, we need not review the contents of the EIS in this decision other than to state that the document meets our

standards for the purpose of Rule 17.1. It is obvious from the street configurations, the available main arteries between the Baysshore Freeway and the bridge, and the traffic projections, that the crossings are necessary and should be approved. The section of the EIS on traffic points out that problems resulting from the increase in traffic will be mitigated by channeling traffic through two or more corridors rather than one, and that these corridors will be upgraded to improve traffic flow.

Findings of Fact

1. The construction of the railroad grade crossings which are the subject of this application is in conformance with an agreement between applicant and the Town of Atherton, Citizens Against the Dumbarton Bridge, and the City of Menlo Park.

2. The only protest to this application was filed by SPT, and it has been withdrawn. Therefore, no hearing is necessary.

3. Proposed crossing protection is adequate.

4. Applicant is the lead agency for this project under the California Environmental Quality Act. Under Commission Rule 17.1 applicant has filed the U.S. Department of Transportation EIS in lieu of its own Environmental Impact Report. The Commission has considered relevant portions of the EIS and finds that the planned construction is the most feasible and economical in minimizing environmental impact.

Conclusions of Law

1. The application should be granted.

2. Since there are no protests, this order should be effective immediately to avoid delay in construction.

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. The State of California, Department of Transportation, is authorized to construct crossings at grade across the tracks of Southern Pacific Transportation Company (SPT) in the County of San Mateo at Chilco Street (to be identified as Crossing DAB-29.5) near station "BH" 8+35 and railroad milepost 29.5, and at University Avenue (to be identified as Crossing DAB-30.8) near station "U" 30+41.613 and railroad milepost 30.8, and is further authorized to relocate the Willow Road grade crossing (identified as Crossing DAB-30.1) at milepost 30.1, as those locations are more fully described in the application and its exhibits.

2. Construction of the crossings shall be equal or superior to Standard No. 1 of General Order 72-B, and shall conform to the agreement mentioned in Finding 1.

3. Clearances shall conform to General Order 26-D. Walkways shall conform to General Order 118.

4. Protection at the crossings shall be as set forth in the opinion section of this decision.

5. Applicant shall bear construction expenses of the crossings and installation costs of the automatic protection devices.

6. Maintenance of the crossings shall be in accordance with General Order 72-B.

7. Cost of maintenance of the automatic protection shall be borne by applicant under Public Utilities Code § 1202.2.

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

9. Within 30 days after completion of each crossing, applicant shall notify the Commission of such completion in writing.


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

This order is effective today.

Dated MAY 4 1982, at San Francisco,  
California.

JOHN E. BRYSON  
President  
RICHARD D. GRAVELLE  
LEONARD M. GRIMES, JR.  
VICTOR CALVO  
PRISCILLA C. GREW  
Commissioners

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

  
Joseph E. Bodovitz, Executive Director