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ORIGINAL

Decision No. 90815 SEP 12 1979

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Application of the State of California, Department of Transportation, for an order authorizing the construction of a new crossing at grade over the tracks of the Southern Pacific Transportation Company's Santa Ana (BK) Branch Track at approximate Railroad Milepost 515.67 and the elimination of existing PUC Crossing PUC No. BK-515.50 in connection with the construction of a new ramp to accommodate southbound traffic onto State Route 5 from Main Street in the City of Santa Ana County of Orange.

Application No. 58797
(Filed April 10, 1979)

O P I N I O N

As part of the project to construct a new Broadway Overcrossing and Interchange modification on the Santa Ana Freeway between 0.5 mile south and 0.5 mile north of Main Street, the State of California, Department of Transportation, requests authority to construct the Buffalo Avenue on-ramp at grade across the tracks of Southern Pacific Transportation Company's Santa Ana Branch Line in the City of Santa Ana, Orange County. After completion of the new crossing, the existing Main Street on-ramp crossing will be abandoned and physically removed.

The State of California, Department of Transportation, is the lead agency for this project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended, Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq.

After preparation and review of an Environmental Impact Report, the California Department of Transportation approved the project. On December 15, 1978, a Notice of Determination was filed with the Secretary for resources which found that "The project will have a significant effect on the environment."

The Commission is a responsible agency for this project under CEQA and has independently evaluated and assessed the lead agency's Environmental Impact Report. The site of the proposed project has also been inspected by the Commission staff.

The Broadway Overcrossing and Interchange modification project will provide much needed additional capacity for vehicles to cross the Santa Ana Freeway in the vicinity of Main Street about one and one-half miles north of the Santa Ana Civic Center. The heavy vehicular volumes and traffic congestion through the nearby signalized intersections and the restricted capacity of the Main Street Overcrossing have dictated the need for geometric modifications of the interchange area and additional widening of Main Street, including the Santa Ana Freeway Overcrossing.

Anticipated significant environmental impacts include displacement of tenants and owners of 31 privately owned parcels of land affected by the project. Removal of dwellings fronting on Broadway will expose presently shielded homes to noise from the existing freeway as well as to noise resulting from traffic on the proposed ramp and overcrossing. Mitigation measures adopted include the provision of relocation assistance to all displaced residents and the construction of sound barriers to reduce the noise pollution to a level of 70 dBA or less.

Notice of the application was published in the Commission's Daily Calendar on April 11, 1979. No protests have been received. A public hearing is not necessary.

F I N D I N G S

After consideration, the Commission finds:

1. Applicant should be authorized to construct the Buffalo Avenue on-ramp to the Santa Ana Freeway at grade across the tracks of Southern Pacific Transportation Company's Santa Ana Branch Line in the City of Santa Ana, Orange County, at the location and substantially as shown by plans attached to the application, to be identified as Crossing BK-515.7.
2. Upon completion of the Buffalo Avenue on-ramp crossing, and its opening to vehicular traffic, the existing Main Street on-ramp crossing, Crossing BK-515.5, should be abandoned and physically removed.
3. Construction of the crossing should be equal or superior to Standard No. 2 of General Order 72-B.

4. Clearances should conform to General Order 26-D. Walkways should conform to General Order 118.

5. Protection at the crossing should be one Standard No. 9 automatic gate-type signal and one Standard No. 8 flashing light signal (General Order 75-C).

6. This project is being constructed with the aid of Federal Funds.

7. Construction costs of the crossing and installation costs of the automatic protection should be apportioned in accordance with applicable Federal Regulations.

8. Construction cost of the crossing and installation cost of the automatic protection should be borne by applicant.

9. Maintenance of the crossing should be in accordance with General Order 72-B.

10. Maintenance costs of the automatic protection should be shared equally by applicant and the railroad pursuant to the provisions of Section 1202.2 of the Public Utilities Code.

11. Construction plans of the crossing, approved by the Southern Pacific Transportation Company, together with a copy of the agreement entered into between the parties involved, should be filed with the Commission prior to commencing construction.

12. Applicant is the lead agency for this project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended.

13. The Commission is a responsible agency and has independently evaluated and assessed the lead agency's Environmental Impact Report.

14. This project will have a significant effect on the environment; however, the adopted mitigation measures should adequately offset the adverse impacts.

C O N C L U S I O N

On the basis of the foregoing findings, we conclude that the application should be granted as set forth in the following order:

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. The State of California, Department of Transportation, is authorized to construct the Buffalo Avenue on-ramp to the Santa Ana Freeway at grade across the tracks of Southern Pacific Transportation Company's Santa Ana Branch Line in the City of Santa Ana, Orange County, as set forth in the findings of this decision.

2. Within thirty days after completion, pursuant to this order, applicant shall so advise the Commission 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.

The effective date of this order shall be thirty days after the date hereof:

Dated SEP 12 1979, at San Francisco, California.

John E. Bruno
President

James H. Stinson

Richard A. Givels

Clayton T. DeLoach

Lawrence W. Jensen
Commissioners