

Decision 95-09-024 September 7, 1995

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 )  
Widen and seismically retrofit the )  
existing State Bridge No. 53-2029R/L, )  
Humphreys Overhead (PUC No. )  
101VY-39.18-A) located in the City of )  
Santa Clarita, Los Angeles County, )  
State of California. )

Application A.95-03-044  
(Filed March 13, 1995)

**ORIGINAL**

O P I N I O N

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) requests authority to widen and seismically retrofit State Route (SR) 14 Antelope Valley Freeway- Humphreys Overhead grade separation bridge structure over Southern California Regional Rail Authority's (SCRRA) Metrolink commuter rail- Valley Subdivision Main Line near the City of Santa Clarita in Los Angeles County. These tracks are jointly used by the Southern Pacific Transportation Company (SPT) for its freight rail service.

Caltrans proposes to reconstruct the median and widen the roadway of SR-14 on its existing alignment from San Fernando Road to 0.3 miles north of Sand Canyon Road and in connection therewith proposes to widen and seismically retrofit the existing Humphreys Overhead structure on the same alignment.

The existing SR-14 grade separation structure will be widened to accommodate a new HOV lane in each direction of travel. Adding the new HOV lane will reduce congestion by increasing capacity and encourage carpooling on this segment of the freeway. The HOV lane addition project is a part of the proposed continuous Route 14 HOV lane projects from Interstate Route 5 (I-5) Golden State Freeway in Santa Clarita to Avenue P-8 overcrossing in Palmdale. The project is consistent with the State's policy of encouraging ridesharing, reduce freeway congestion thereby reducing

traffic accidents, and improving the Los Angeles Basin's overall air quality.

Caltrans, the lead agency for this project under the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA), as amended, Public Resources (PR) Code Section 21000, et seq., has prepared a Categorical Exemption Determination regarding this project under PR Code Section 21080.13. The Categorical Exemption Determination, dated November 22, 1994, states, "that the project would not have any 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 Categorical Exemption determination. The site of the proposed project has been inspected by the Commission's Safety and Enforcement Division staff - Traffic Engineering Section. Staff examined the need for and the safety of the widening, and recommends that the alterations be approved.

The application was found to be in compliance under the Commission's filing requirements, including Rule 39 of Rules and Practice and Procedure which relates to the widening of existing crossings and separations over railroad tracks. A location map and details from the project plans are shown in Appendix A.

#### Finding of Fact

1. Notice of the application was published in the Commission Daily Calendar on April 6, 1995. No protests have been received. A public hearing is not necessary.

2. Caltrans requests authority, under Public Utilities Code Sections 1201-1205, to widen and seismically retrofit SR-14 Humphreys Overhead at separated grade over SCRRA's Metrolink Valley Subdivision Main Line near the City of Santa Clarita, Los Angeles County. These tracks are jointly used by SPT for its freight rail service.

3. Widening and seismic retrofit of the SR-14 Humphreys Overhead are essential elements for the improvement of vehicular freeway traffic flow in Los Angeles County.

4. Public convenience, necessity and safety require widening and seismic retrofit of SR-14 Antelope Valley Freeway- Humphreys Overhead, grade separation structure, to improve traffic flow.

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 Categorical Exemption Determination.

Conclusion of Law

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

2. Under Public Resources Code Section 21080.13 the activity is exempted from the requirements set forth in CEQA; therefore the guidelines (14 Cal. Admin. Code - Division 6) concerning the evaluation of projects and the preparation and review of environmental documents do not apply.

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. The State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is authorized to widen and seismically retrofit State Route (SR) 14 Antelope Valley Freeway- Humphreys Overhead over Southern California Regional Rail Authority's (SCRRA) Valley Subdivision Main Line, identified as Crossings 101VY-39.18-A (formerly SPT Crossing B-443.40-A), near the City of Santa Clarita, Los Angeles County at the location and substantially as shown by plans attached to the Application and Appendix A of this order.

2. Clearances shall be in accordance with General Order (GO) 26-D; except that during the period of construction a clearance of not less than 21 feet 6 inches above top of rail shall be authorized and SCRRA and SPT shall be authorized to operate with such reduced overhead clearance provided that instructions are issued by the railroad and filed with the Commission's Safety and Enforcement Division forbidding employees to ride on tops of cars beneath the structure.

3. Caltrans shall notify the Commission's Safety and Enforcement Division, SCRRA and SPT at least 15, but not more than 30, days in advance of the date when 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 approved by SCRRRA and SPT shall be filed with the Commission's Safety and Enforcement Division Staff 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 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.

9. This order is effective 30 days from today.

Dated SEPT 7, 1995, at Los Angeles, California.

DANIEL Wm. FESSLER  
President

P. GREGORY CONLON

JESSIE J. KNIGHT, JR.

HENRY M. DUQUE

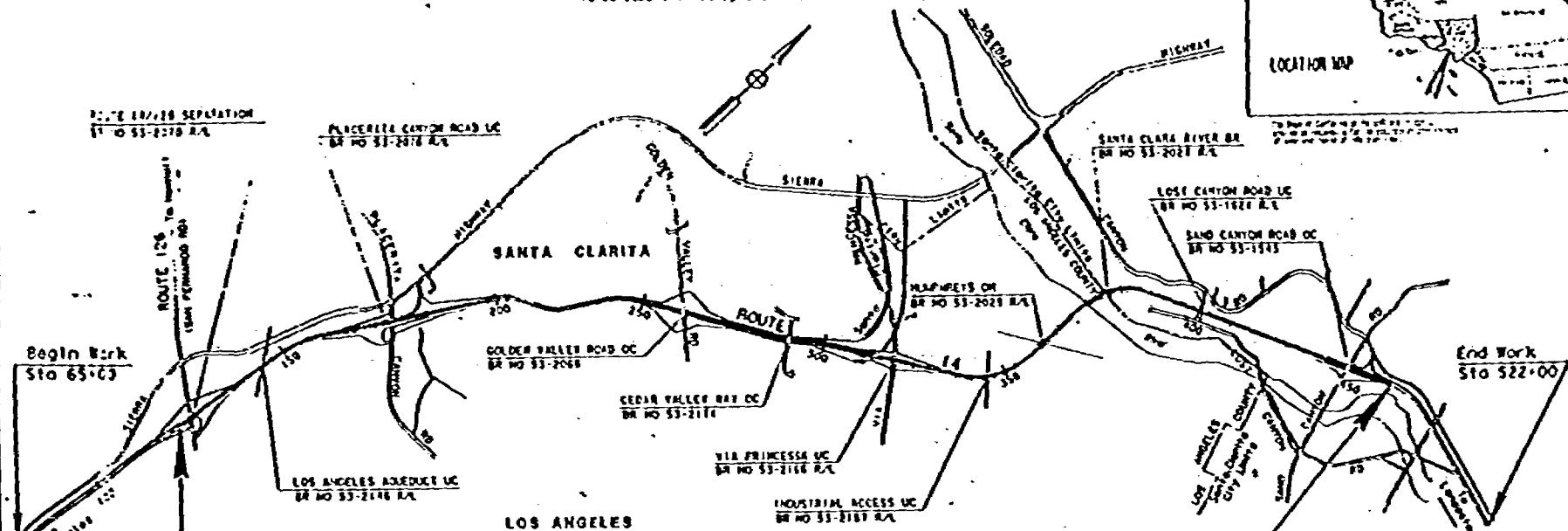
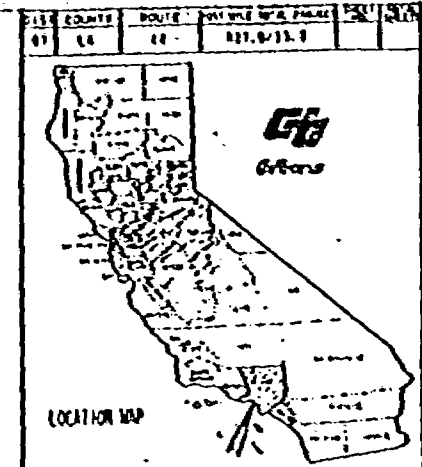
Commissioners

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

*Wentley Franklin*  
Acting Executive Director

PAGE OF SHEETS

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
 PROJECT PLANS FOR CONSTRUCTION ON  
**STATE HIGHWAY**  
 IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
 IN AND NEAR SANTA CLARITA  
 FROM ROUTE 14/126 SEPARATION  
 TO 0.3 MILE NORTH OF  
 SAND CANYON ROAD OVERCROSSING  
 to be supplemented by Standard Plans dated July, 1952



**BEGIN CONSTRUCTION**  
 STA 116+15 PM R27.0

**END CONSTRUCTION**  
 STA 471+00 PM 33.7

*J. O. G. J. J. J.*  
 J. O. G. J. J. J.  
 CIVIL  
 1952

CONTRACT NO. 07-116204  
 SHEET NO. 1 OF 2  
 DATE: 1952

The Contractor shall possess the Class for Class of License as specified in the "Notice to Contractors".

NO SCALE

Contract No. 07-116204

