

RS&C/RRT/hsm

Decision 96-11-035 November 26, 1996

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 bike path over the tracks of)
the San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway)
Company (SD&AE) by means of an at-grade)
crossing and under the Metropolitan)
Transportation Development Board's)
Trolley by means of a grade separation)
located in the City of Chula Vista and)
National City, San Diego County,)
State of California.)

ORIGINAL

Application 96-03-037
(Filed March 20, 1996
Amended July 15, 1996)

O P I N I O N

State of California, Department of Transportation (Caltrans) requests authority to construct a bike path across the tracks of the San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway Company's (SD&AE) Chula Vista Branch Line by means of an at-grade crossing, and under the tracks of the San Diego Metropolitan Transit Development Board's (MTDB) Main Line by means of a grade separation, in the Cities of Chula Vista and National City, San Diego County.

Caltrans proposes to construct a Bay Shore Bike Route. At the foot of E Street, west of I-5, the class I facility will begin immediately adjacent to the I-5 southbound exit ramp, and continue northerly along the freeway and across the Sweetwater Channel. At this point a new bridge will be constructed across the channel. This class I facility would continue along the north levee of the Sweetwater Channel to Pepper Park at the foot of Tideland Avenue. There will also be a connection to the existing Class I bike path along the north levee of the channel east of I-5. From Pepper Park to 24th Street, a Class III facility will share

Tidelands Avenue north to the 24th Street intersection where it will rejoin the existing Class III Bike Way.

The existing interim Sweetwater Channel segment of the Bay Sore Bike Route traverses several major arterials and local streets in the cities of Chula Vista and National City. This segment includes approximately 2.3 miles (3.70 km) of out of direction travel on several congested city streets. Due to increasing traffic volume on these roadways, the interim segment has become an awkward route for bicyclists. To meet the growing demands of motor vehicles, and enhance bicycle usage and safety, this interim segment is proposed to be improved.

The proposed underpass will provide a crossing at separated grades. An existing bridge carries MTDB's trolley over the Sweetwater Channel. The Class I bike path will traverse under this existing bridge and continue in an east-west direction on the levy to join the existing bike path and maintenance road.

Caltrans is the lead agency for this project under the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA), as amended, Public Resources (PR) Code Sections 21000, et seq. On June 30, 1995, Caltrans prepared an Initial Study and submitted a Negative Declaration on this project to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). On August 10, 1995, the FHWA determined that "The project will not have an adverse effect on the environment."

The Commission is a responsible agency for this project under CEQA, and has reviewed and considered the lead agency's Negative Declaration. The site of the proposed at grade crossing has been inspected in the field and the proposed plans have been reviewed by the Commission's Rail Safety/Carriers Division Traffic Engineering staff.

The application was found to be in compliance with the Commission's filing requirements including Rule 38 of the Rules of Practice and Procedure which relate to the construction of public highways across railroads. Detailed drawings of the proposed construction are included in the appendices of this order.

Findings of Fact

1. Notice of the Application and its Amendment were published in the Commission's Daily Calendar on March 25, 1996 and July 24, 1996 respectively. No protests have been received. A public hearing is not necessary.

2. Caltrans requests authority under Public Utilities Code Sections 1201-1205 to construct a bike path across the tracks of the San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway Company's (SD&AE) Chula Vista Branch Line by means of an at-grade crossing, and under the tracks of the San Diego Metropolitan Transit Development Board's (MTDB) Main Line by means of a grade separation, in the Cities of Chula Vista and National City, San Diego County.

3. Public convenience, and necessity require construction of the Bay Shore Bike Route to eliminate the unnecessary out of direction bicycle travel, provide an adequate route for projected increasing amounts of bicycle traffic, and improve bicycle safety.

4. Public safety requires that the new proposed SD&AE at-grade crossing be protected by two Standard No. 1-D pedestrian and bicycle railroad grade crossing signs (General Order (GO) 75-C).

5. Public safety also requires that the MTDB light rail transit tracks be grade separated as indicated by Appendix A of this order.

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

7. The Commission is a responsible agency for this project, and has reviewed and considered the lead agency's Initial Study, Negative Declaration, and FHWA's finding of No Significant Impact.

Conclusion of Law:

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

ORDER

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. State of California, Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is authorized to construct a bike path at-grade across the tracks of the San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway Company's (SD&AE) Chula Vista Branch Line, to be identified as Crossing 36B-5.86, and to construct a grade separation under the tracks of the San Diego Metropolitan Transit Development Board's (MTDB) Main Line, to be identified as Crossing 36-6.27-B, in the Cities of Chula Vista and National City, San Diego County, as more fully indicated and substantially as shown by plans attached to the application and Appendix A of this order.

2. Walkways shall conform to General Order (GO) 118 and clearances shall be in accordance with GO 26-D for the SD&AE crossing.

3. Clearances shall be in accordance with GO 143 for MTDB.

4. Construction of the SD&AE at-grade crossing shall be equal or superior to Standard No. 1 of GO 72-B. Maintenance of the crossing shall conform to GO 72-B.

5. Protection at the SD&AE at-grade Crossing 36B-5.86 shall be two Standard No. 1-D pedestrian and bicycle-railroad grade crossing signs (GO 75-C).

6. Construction and maintenance costs shall be borne by Caltrans. A copy of the agreement approved by SD&AE and MTDB shall be filed with the Commission's Rail Safety/Carriers Division prior to commencing construction.

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

8. 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.

9. The application is granted as set forth above.

10. Application 96-03-037 is closed.

This order becomes effective 30 days from today.

Dated NOV 26, 1996 at San Francisco, California.

P. GREGORY CONLON

President

DANIEL Wm. FESSLER

JESSIE J. KNIGHT, JR.

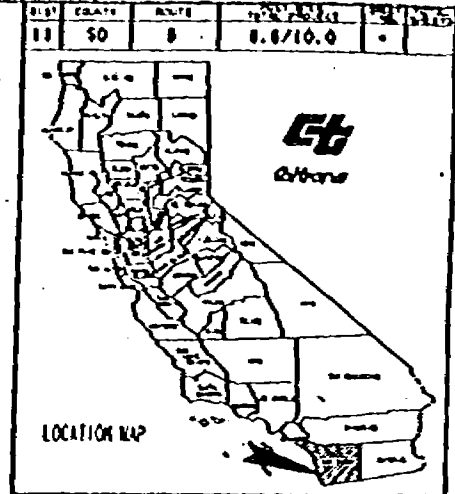
JOSIAH L. NEEPER

Commissioners

Commissioner Henry M. Duque,
being necessarily absent, did not
participate.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
**PROJECT PLANS FOR CONSTRUCTION ON
 STATE HIGHWAY**
IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY
**IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY IN CHULA VISTA AND
 NATIONAL CITY FROM THE E STREET OVERCROSSING
 TO THE 24TH STREET OVERCROSSING**

To be supplemented by Standard Plans dated July, 1992



A:96-03-037
RSMC/RRT/hsm



LOCATION 1

PUC 36B-5.86

PARADISE MARSH BIKE PATH
BR NO 57-C-203

SWEETWATER CHANNEL BIKE PATH
BR NO 57-18522

Begin Work
Sta

**BEGIN CONSTRUCTION
STA "B" 100+01.70**

PUC NO. 36B-5.65

CHULA VISTA

**BEGIN CONSTRUCTION
STA "A" 100+77.16**

**END WORK AND
CONSTRUCTION
STA "A" 149+29.94**

NATIONAL CITY

PUC NO. 36-6.25A

PUC NO. 36B-6.9

Begin Work
Sta

**END WORK AND
CONSTRUCTION
STA "B" 129+72.81**

PUC NO. 36-6.37A

LOCATION 2

PUC 36-6.27B

**VICINITY MAP
NO SCALE**

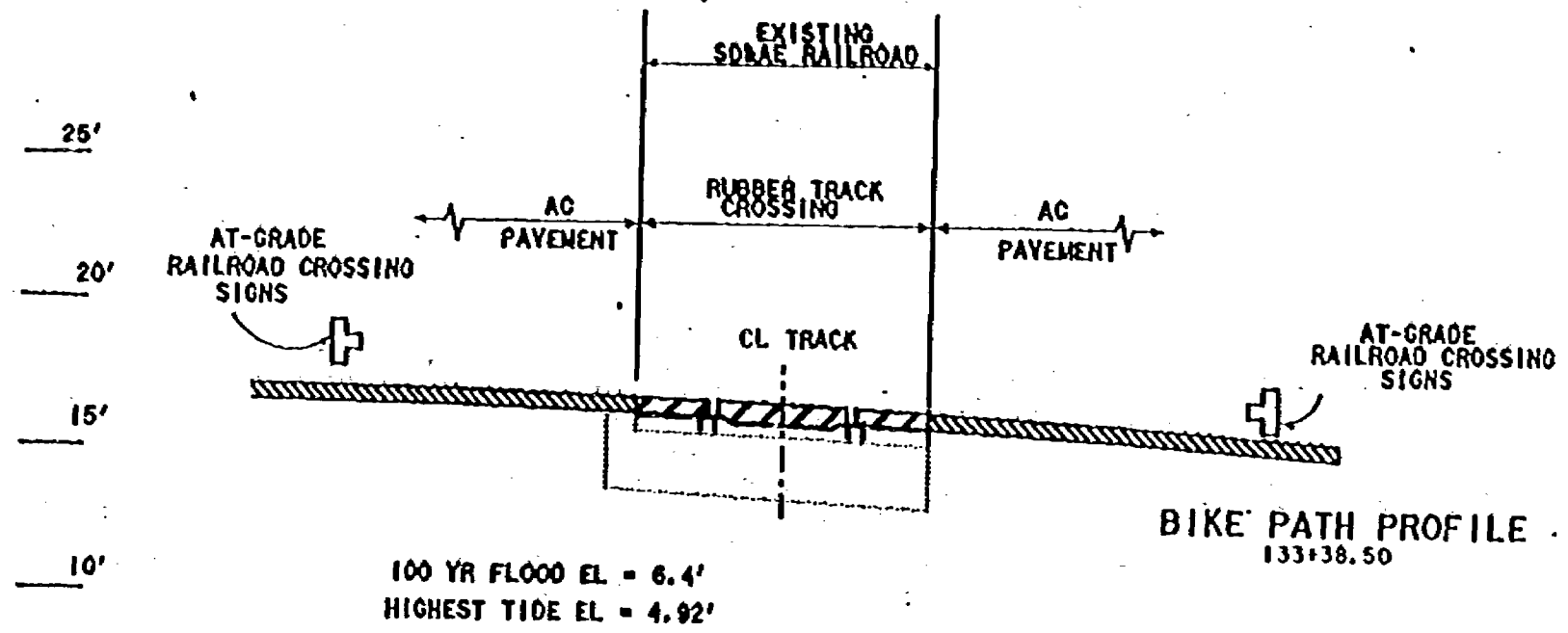
Project Engineer
Ag. 11-11-94



File Number 111

You shall possess the Plans for a period of 180 days
from the date of the "Notice to Contractors".

Contract No. 11-047874

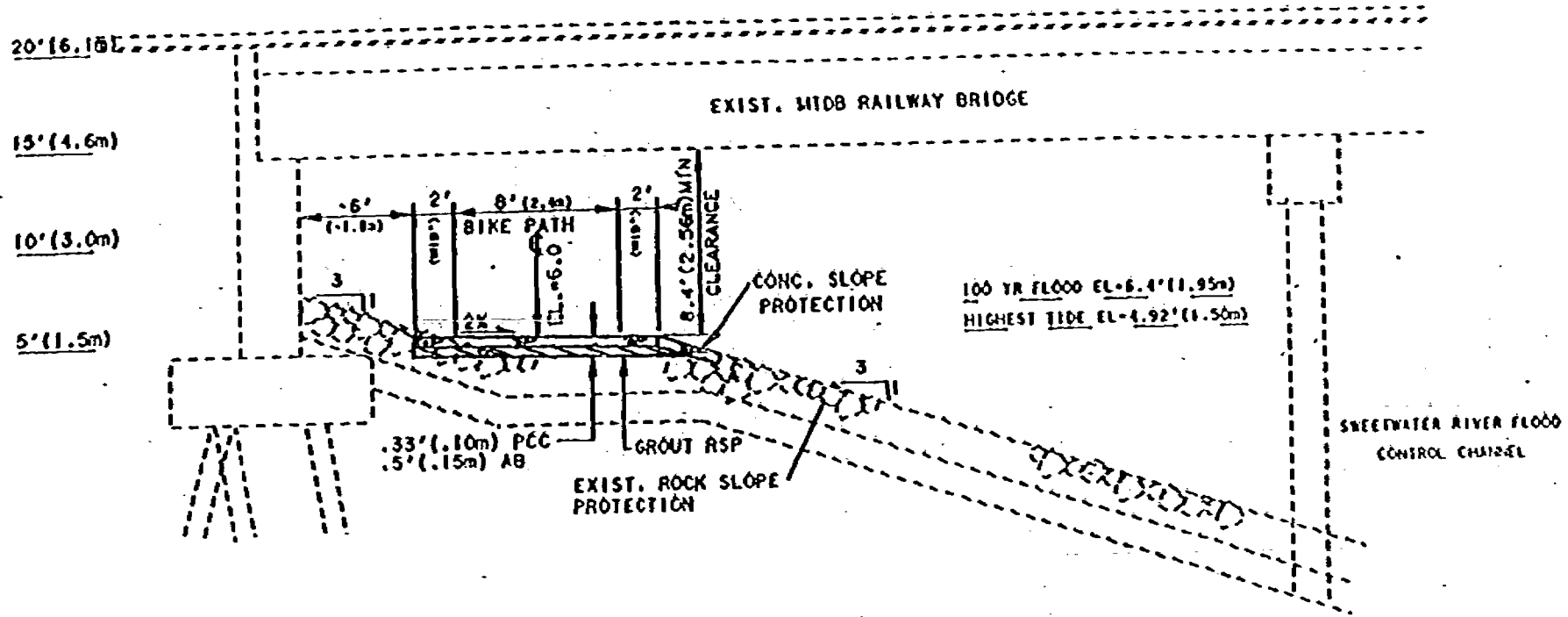


11-SD-5 PM 6.6/10.0

TYPICAL SECTION

AT-GRADE
BIKE PATH CROSSING @
EXISTING SOBÆ RAILROAD

NO SCALE LOCATION I



11-SD-5 PM 8.6/10.0

TYPICAL SECTION

PROPOSED BIKE PATH @
 MTDB RAILWAY BRIDGE
 LOCATION 2

No Scale