

Decision 97-03-045 March 18, 1997

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Application of the City of Bakersfield)
for an Order authorizing construction of)
a crossing at separated grades between Q)
Street and the tracks of The Burlington)
Northern and Santa Fe Railway, sometimes)
referred to as the "Q Street Underpass")
(PUC No. 2-886.9B)

ORIGINAL

Application 97-02-026
(Filed February 18, 1997)

O P I N I O N

The City of Bakersfield (City) requests authority to construct Q Street Underpass at separated grades under the tracks of The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company's (BNSF) Fresno-Bakersfield Main Line in Bakersfield, Kern County.

City proposes to construct a grade separation Underpass, consisting of a prestressed concrete structure, which will carry Q Street under under BNSF's two main line tracks. Total length of the underpass will be approximately 148 feet measured back-to-back of abutments. Superstructure, abutments and piers will be of reinforced concrete. Four 12-foot vehicular lanes, one 14-foot median, and two 6-foot bicycle path-sidewalks will be carried through the proposed underpass. Total width of the underpass structure will be 37 feet 0 inches. During the period of construction, vehicular traffic will be carried across the present S Street at-grade crossing. Upon completion of the grade separation Underpass and its availability for public traffic, vehicular traffic will be rerouted from the S Street at-grade crossing, which will be entirely removed and closed, to the grade separation Underpass.

The Q Street Underpass project ranks number 16 in the

1996-1997 Grade Separation Priority List of Decision (D.) 96-06-041, dated June 19, 1996, in Order Instituting Investigation (I.) 95-07-003.

City is the lead agency for this project under California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA), as amended, Public Resources (PR) Code Sections 21000, et seq. City has determined that this project, the elimination of an existing at-grade crossing, is categorically exempt from the reporting requirements of CEQA under PR Code Section 21080.13.

The Commission is a responsible agency for this project under CEQA, and has also reviewed and considered the lead agency's exemption determination. The existing P Street, Q Street and S Street at-grade crossings and adjacent areas have been inspected by the Commission's Rail Safety and Carriers Division Staff - Traffic Engineering Section. After reviewing the need for and safety of the proposed Q Street Underpass, Staff recommends that City's request be granted.

The application was found to be in compliance under the Commission's filing requirements, including Rule 38 of Rules of Practice and Procedure which relates to the construction of public highway crossings and separations under a railroad. A site map and detailed drawing of the Underpass structure are shown in Appendix A.

City plans to file application for grade separation funds prior to the filing date of April 1, 1997, therefore, this order should be effective immediately.

Findings of Fact

1. Notice of the Application was published in the Commission's Daily Calendar on February 25, 1997. No protests have been received. A public hearing is not necessary.

2. City requests authority under Public Utilities Code Sections 1201-1205 to construct Q Street Underpass grade separation

under the tracks of BNSF's Fresno-Bakersfield Main Line in Bakersfield, Kern County.

3. The Q Street Underpass grade separation will improve traffic circulation and reduce traffic impacts of high-volume, slow moving eastbound and westbound rail freight traffic.

4. The grade separation Underpass is required to carry vehicular traffic under the heavily used BNSF railroad freight line.

5. Public convenience, necessity and safety require construction of the grade separation Underpass.

6. Upon the commencement of construction, the existing at-grade crossings at P Street and Q Street will be closed permanently and vehicular traffic will be carried across the existing S Street at-grade crossing. Upon completion of the Q Street Underpass and its opening to vehicular traffic, the existing at-grade crossing at S Street will be closed.

7. City is the lead agency for this project under CEQA, as amended.

8. The Commission is a responsible agency for this project, and has reviewed and considered the lead agency's exemption determination.

Conclusions of Law

1. 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.

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

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED THAT:

1. City of Bakersfield (City) is authorized to construct Q Street Underpass at separated grades under the tracks of The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company's (BNSF) Fresno-Bakersfield Main Line in Bakersfield, Kern County, at the location and substantially as shown by plans attached to the Application and Appendix A of this order, identified as Crossing 2-886.9-B.

2. Upon the commencement of construction, the existing P Street and Q Street at-grade Crossings 2-886.95 and 2-886.9, respectively, shall be closed and physically removed and vehicular traffic will be carried across the existing S Street at-grade crossing. Upon completion of the Q Street Underpass and its opening to vehicular traffic, the existing S Street at-grade Crossing 2-886.7 shall be closed and physically removed.

3. Clearances shall be in accordance with General Order (GO) 26-D. Walkways shall conform to GO 118.

4. 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 BNSF, shall be filed with the Commission's Rail Safety and Carriers 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.

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

6. 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.

7. The application is granted as set forth above.
This order becomes effective today.

Dated March 18, 1997, at San Francisco, California.

P. GREGORY CONLON
President

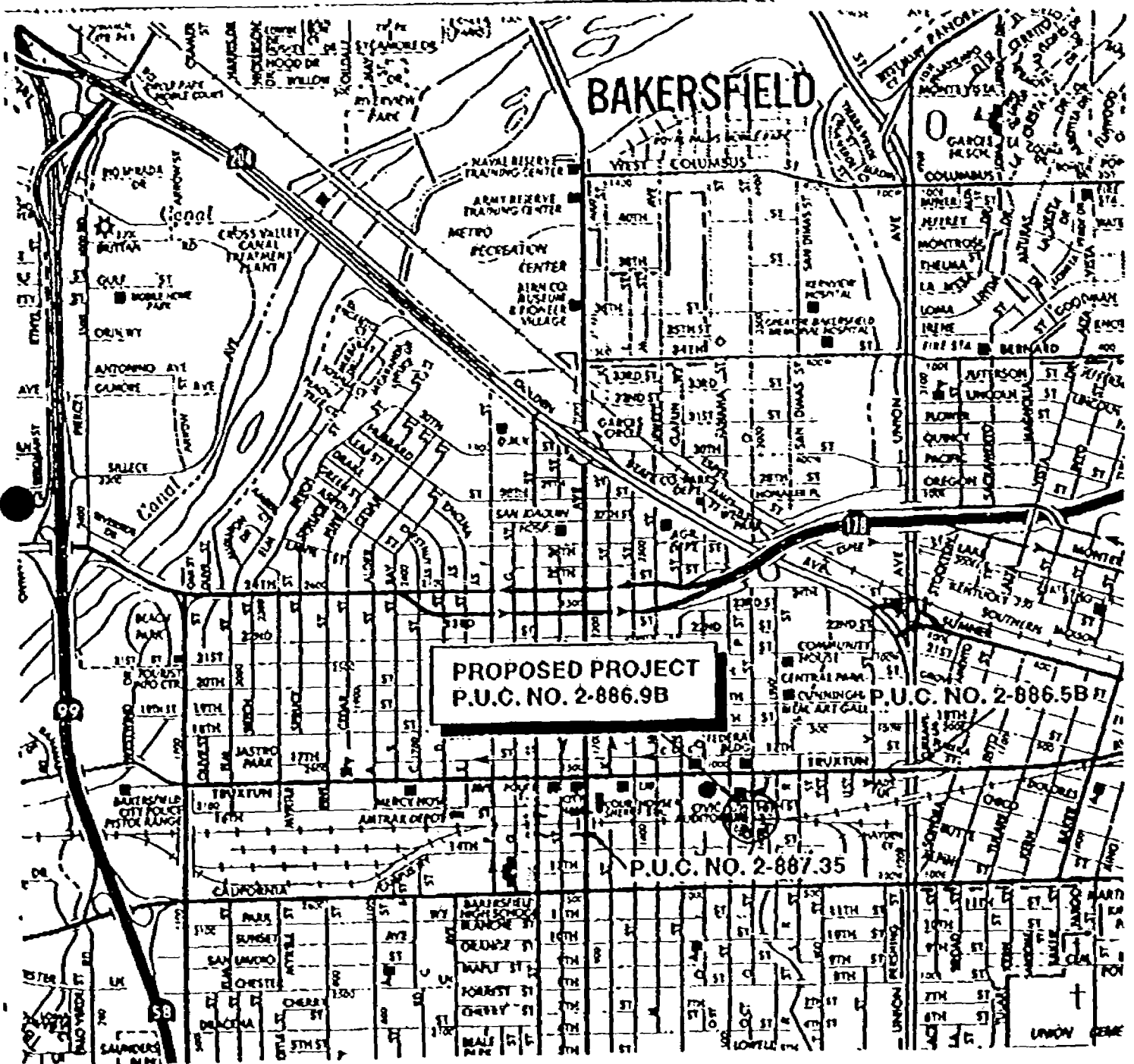
JESSIE J. KNIGHT, JR.

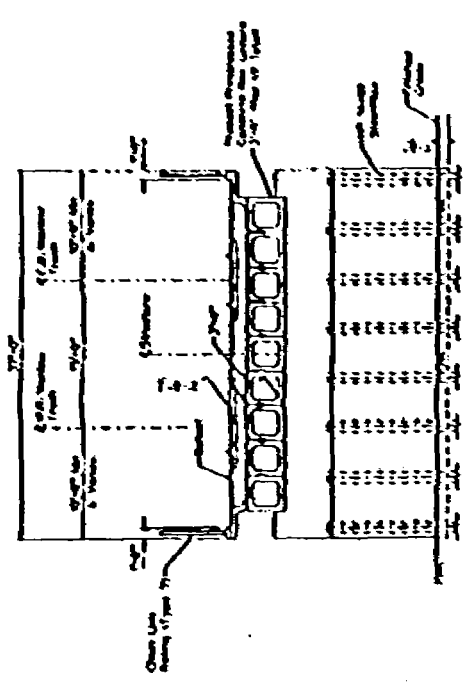
HENRY M. DUQUE

JOSIAH L. NEEPER

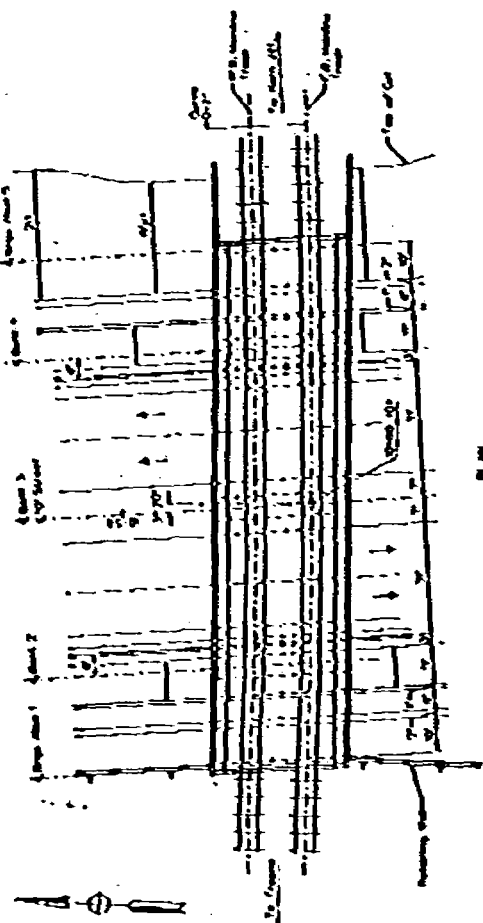
RICHARD A. BILAS

Commissioners

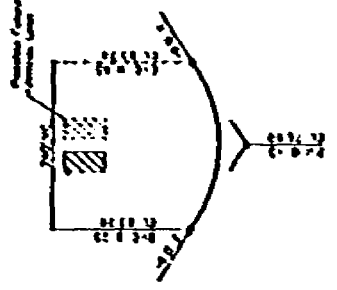




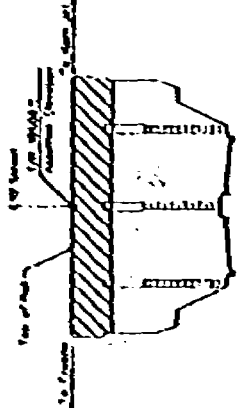
FLOOR PLAN



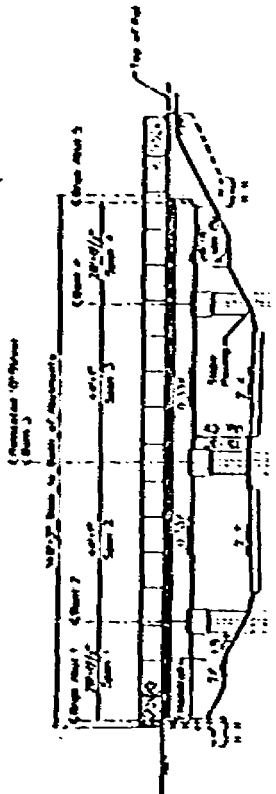
ELEVATION



CROSS SECTION



CROSS SECTION



ELEVATION

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
DISTRICT ENGINEERS
B.A. & S.F. PULPAC NO. 2-186109
CONCRETE PLAN & ELEVATION

