

Mailed: 6/17/97

ORIGINAL

Decision 97-06-040 June 11, 1997

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Application of the County of Sacramento)
 to construct and convert One grade)
 crossing from private to public of the)
 Sacramento County Track Leased from)
 Federal Government and the Southern)
 Pacific Lines operates at Mather)
 Boulevard, Formerly Spaatz Way in the)
 County of Sacramento, State of)
 California.)

Application 96-08-064
(Filed August 23, 1996)

O P I N I O N

As part of the Mather Field Roadway Improvement Project, the County of Sacramento (County) requests authority to construct Mather Boulevard at grade across the tracks of the Department of Air Force (DOA), at the former Mather Field Air Force Base (Base), located in said County.

The purpose of the Improvement project is to provide needed infrastructure within the Base in preparation for conversion to public use. This will be achieved through rebuilding or abandonment of roadways, construction of new road alignments, upgrading railroad crossings, utility installation or upgrade, etc. Mather Boulevard is one of several arterials proposed for construction. It will serve as a primary connector between the central and west sectors of the Base.

The Base, owned by DOA, is under long-term lease to County. The DOA tracks (also under lease) extend from a spurline of the Union Pacific Railroad, formerly the Southern Pacific Transportation Company AH-line, 0.5 miles outside the Base (measured along the track). The proposed crossing is to be located

just inside the north boundary of the Base where the spur track enters, milepost 001AH-103.08-C. It will consist of a 54 foot wide roadway (including 12' median and two 4' sidewalks) crossing two DOA tracks.

At present, there is no rail service on Base. However, County wishes to preserve the rail system for potential future use. Special provisions on warning signs/devices are delineated in the Ordering section of this decision.

County is the lead agency for this project under the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA), as amended, Public Resources Code Sections 21000, et. seq. After preparation and review of an Initial Study, County issued a Negative Declaration. On October 17, 1996, County filed a Notice of Determination which found that the "project will not have a 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 Initial Study and Negative Declaration.

The site of the proposed project has been inspected by the Commission's Rail Safety and Carriers Division Traffic Engineering staff. The staff examined the need for and safety of the proposed crossing and recommends that the sought authority be granted.

Application 96-08-064 meets the filing requirements of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, including Rule 38 which relates to the construction of a public highway across a railroad. A sketch of the project area is set forth as Appendix A.

Findings of Fact

1. Notice of the application was published in the Commission's Daily Calendar on September 4, 1996. No protests have been filed.

2. County requests authority, under Public Utilities Code Sections 1201-1205, to construct Mather Boulevard at grade across the tracks of DOA in said County.

3. County is the lead agency for this project under CEQA, as amended.

4. Public convenience, necessity, and safety require the construction of the Mather Boulevard crossing.

5. Train movements across this crossing will be precluded by installation of rail bumpers. Standard No. R8-9 signs (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices) will be installed for each approach alerting vehicular traffic "TRACKS OUT OF SERVICE".

6. As part of this project, the existing crossings at Cottonwood Lane (001D-127.80-C and 001D-128.00-C) shall be closed and physically removed.

7. The Commission is a responsible agency for this project and has reviewed and considered the lead agency's Initial Study and Negative Declaration.

8. The project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

Conclusions of Law

1. The application is uncontested and a public hearing is not necessary.

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

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. The County of Sacramento (County) is authorized to construct Mather Boulevard at grade across the tracks of the Department of Air Force in said County at the location and substantially as shown on the plans attached to the application, to be identified as Crossing 001AH-103.08-C.

2. One Standard No. R8-9 "TRACKS OUT OF SERVICE" warning sign shall be installed at each approach to the crossing as specified in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

3. Rail bumpers shall be installed on the track just north of the crossing to block any rail traffic across the roadway.

4. Prior to reactivation of rail service, County shall seek Commission approval to remove the warning signs and bumpers described in paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Ordering section. At that time, appropriate warning devices shall be installed by County as determined by the Commission's Rail Safety and Carrier's Division.

5. Clearances shall be in accordance with General Order (GO) 26-D.

6. Construction of the grade crossing shall be equal or superior to the Standard No. 1 as specified in GO 72-B. Maintenance of the crossings shall conform to GO 72-B.

7. 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.

8. Final construction plans shall be filed by County with the Commission's Rail Safety and Carriers Division prior to commencing construction.

9. Construction and maintenance costs of the crossing shall be borne by the County.

10. Upon completion of the Mather Boulevard crossing and its subsequent opening to vehicular traffic, the existing crossings at Cottonwood Lane (001D-127.80-C and 001D-128.00-C) shall be closed and physically removed.

11. Within thirty (30) days after completion of the work under this order, County shall advise the Commission's Rail Safety and Carriers Division in writing that the authorized work has been completed.

12. This authorization shall expire if not exercised within two (2) 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.

13. The application is granted as set forth above.

A.96-08-064 RS&C/ARO

14. Application 96-08-064 is closed.
This order becomes effective thirty (30) days from today.

Dated JUNE 11, 1997, at San Francisco, California.

P. GREGORY CONLON

President

JESSIE J. KNIGHT, JR.

HENRY M. DUQUE

JOSIAH L. NEEPER

RICHARD A. BILAS

Commissioners