

Decision 99-04-019 April 1, 1999

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application of )  
 Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority )  
 for an order authorizing the relocation of )  
 17 single track highway grade crossings, )  
 of two single track separated highway )  
 crossings and one single track grade separated )  
 railroad crossing located between Firestone )  
 Boulevard, PUC crossing number BG-489.50 )  
 and Auto Drive South, PUC crossing number )  
 BG-495.09, inclusive in the County of Los )  
 Angeles, City of South Gate, City of Lynwood )  
and City of Compton, California. )

Application 98-11-010  
(Filed November 2, 1998)

OPINION

Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority (ACTA) requests authority to relocate 17 single-track highway grade crossings; two single-track grade separated highway crossings, and one grade-separated railroad crossing between Firestone Boulevard grade crossing and Auto Drive South, inclusive, in the County of Los Angeles, Cities of South Gate, Lynwood and Compton, as set forth in Appendices "A", "B" and "C" and as more fully described and indicated by text and plans attached to the application.

ACTA was created in 1989 as a Joint Power Organization as a result of studies and planning activities that showed the need for a consolidated railroad link between the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach (Ports) and the regional and national railroad systems. Construction of a twenty mile, two track railroad link is planned upon former Southern Pacific Transportation Company San Pedro Branch right-of-way that ACTA has acquired.

The fundamental purpose of the Alameda Corridor project is to provide an improved goods movement without the adverse consequences of increased future freight rail traffic

Ports and accommodating the Ports' growth, the planned corridor will reduce highway congestion, air pollution and noise which is most beneficial in residential areas. It will also reduce delays at existing at-grade railroad crossings and will provide enhanced safety. Through train operations over ninety miles of existing trackage will be consolidated into the new corridor which will be entirely grade separated and will greatly reduce present vehicular delays along existing San Pedro Branch Line Corridor.

The entire Alameda Corridor Program has forty railroad-highway crossings along its three major sections:

1. The North End, consists of several segments and ten public crossings. The Redondo Junction Grade Separation is one of these segments and extends from a point south of Olympic Boulevard along the west bank of the Los Angeles River, then continues southeasterly to the intersection of The Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company (BNSF) right-of-way, east of Soto Street. PUC authority for construction of the Redondo Junction Grade Separation was requested in A.98-04-047, filed April 23, 1998. Another segment consists of the connection of the railroad tracks from the Ports to the BNSF San Bernardino Subdivision and to the Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) tracks.

By Decision (D.) 98-10-015, dated October 8, 1998, the Commission granted authority to construct the railroad-railroad grade separation for the tracks of the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) to pass over the tracks of ACTA, the Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) and BNSF. The structure when completed will also go over Washington Boulevard; and the Soto Street Separation will be altered and reconstructed.

2. The Mid-Corridor along Alameda Street between Santa Fe Avenue in Los Angeles and State Highway 91 in Compton will be a ten-mile, thirty-three feet deep, fifty-foot wide, depressed double-track railroad with twenty-nine road crossings and three railroad crossings above and across the depressed railroad. Included in this Mid-Corridor will be a 5.6 mile, at-grade UP By-Pass track

parallel to the depressed railroad along the east side of the ACTA right-of-way. This at-grade connection with 17 grade crossings, two grade separations, and one separated railroad crossing, between the existing tracks at the State Highway 91 overpass and the track's connection to the UP Santa Ana Branch, north of Firestone Boulevard, is the subject of this application. The Mid-Corridor extends from Los Angeles through the Cities of Los Angeles, Vernon, Huntington Park, South Gate, Lynwood, Compton, and the unincorporated County of Los Angeles.

3. The South End Corridor trackage extends at-grade along Alameda Street through unincorporated County of Los Angeles, City of Carson, and City of Los Angeles to the Ports and serves Dolores Yard, the Intermodal Container Facility (ICF) and various industries en route. Planning is ongoing to grade separate existing grade crossings that will result in the filing of subsequent applications to the Commission.

The instant By-Pass Track Project concerns the relocation of approximately 5.6 miles of the former Southern Pacific Transportation Company San Pedro Branch Line track, now owned by ACTA and operated by UP. In order to accommodate the construction of the thirty-three feet deep and fifty foot wide depressed structure for the new depressed double track main line, it will be necessary to construct approximately 5.6 miles of relocated track connecting San Pedro Branch track near State Highway 91 overcrossing with the UP Santa Ana Branch to provide undiminished Port access to UP while by-passing the construction of the trench. It is proposed to relocate the existing track alignment from the center of the existing right-of-way to the eastern most edge.

The grade crossings listed in Appendices A through C will be reconstructed, eliminating the existing hump in the roadway, and will have automatic crossing gates with flashing lights and electronic devices to provide constant warning time for gate operation at the crossings regardless of train speed.

Applicant states that the relocated track will remain in operation following construction of the depressed trainway and its being placed in operation. However, the

proposed configuration of the grade crossings in this application is an interim design intended to exist only during the time of detailed design and construction of the permanent bridges that will support the street crossings above the depressed trainway. Each of the bridges will of necessity include in their design a final design of the Alameda Street East intersection and a final design of the grade crossing warning devices, traffic signals, signing, and lane stripping. The length of time of existence of the configuration shown for the crossings in this application is not precisely known at this time. However, it is estimated to exist, in most cases, from zero to nine months. Moreover, depending on the sequence of construction, the ability to temporarily close the crossings, or to construct detours as determined by the contractor and public entities, the temporary situation may extend in some cases to fourteen months.

Commission authority to construct the grade separations for the streets above the depressed trainway and the reconfiguration of this interim design of the grade crossings as requested herein will be subject of subsequent applications as will authority to construct the grade separations not involving the relocation of this UP connecting track.

ACTA 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 27, 1997, the State of California Clearinghouse advised ACTA, that it had complied with State Clearinghouse review requirements for "draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)." The United States Department of Transportation issued a Record of Decision approving Alameda Corridor Project. ACTA had previously prepared an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on January 1993, and an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in February 1996.

The Commission is a responsible agency for this project under CEQA and has reviewed and considered ACTA's environmental documentation. The site of the project has been inspected by the Commission's Rail Safety and Carrier Division - Rail Crossings Engineering Section staff. Staff examined the need for and the safety of the proposed grade separations and related railroad construction and recommends that the application be approved.

The application is in compliance with the Commission's filing requirements, including Rules 39, 40 and 41 of the Rules of Practice and Procedure which relates to the construction and widening of public highway crossings and separations over a railroad. A site map of the grade crossing and separations is as shown on plans attached to the application and Appendices A through C.

In Resolution ALJ 176-3005, dated December 7, 1998, the Commission preliminarily categorized this application as ratesetting, and preliminarily determined that hearings were not necessary. No protests have been received, and The Commission's Rail Safety and Carriers Division recommends that this application be granted. Given these developments, public hearing is not necessary, and it is not necessary to disturb the preliminary determinations made in Resolution ALJ 176-3005.

This is an uncontested matter in which the decision grants the relief requested. Accordingly, pursuant to PU Code Section 311 (g) (2), the otherwise applicable 30-day period for public review and comment is being waived.

#### Findings of Fact

1. Notice of the application was published in the Commission Daily Calendar on November 19, 1998. No protests have been received. A public hearing is not necessary.

2. ACTA requests authority, under Public Utilities Code Sections 1201-1205, to relocate 17 single-track highway grade crossings, two single-track grade separations, and one single-track grade separated railroad crossing over the former Southern Pacific Transportation Company's San Pedro Branch Line track, now owned by ACTA and operated by the Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP), in the County of Los Angeles, Cities of South Gate, Lynwood, and Compton, as set forth in Appendices A through C, and as more fully described and indicated by text and plans attached to the application.

3. The Alameda Corridor and related rail projects are required to provide improved goods movement, to accommodate the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles growth, reduce highway congestion, reduce air pollution and noise, which will benefit adjacent residential and industrial areas.

4. Public convenience and necessity require relocation of the grade crossings and construction of the by-pass track, in connection with the Alameda Corridor project, as set forth in Appendices A, B, C, and as more fully described in the application.

5. Public safety requires that all crossings that are not grade separated be protected by automatic warning devices as set forth in Appendix C attached to this order.

6. ACTA 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 EIR, EIS, and U.S. Department of Transportation Record of Decision.

#### Conclusion of Law

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

### O R D E R

#### **IT IS ORDERED** that:

1. Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority (ACTA) is authorized to relocate 17 single-track highway grade crossings; two single-track grade separated highway crossings, and one grade-separated railroad crossing between Firestone Boulevard grade crossing and Auto Drive South, inclusive, in the Cities of South Gate, Lynwood and Compton. The entire project is in Los Angeles County, as more fully described in the application and as set forth in Appendices A, B, and C.

2. Construction and maintenance of the crossings shall be in accordance with the provisions of General Order (GO) 72-B.

3. Crossing warning devices shall be in accordance with the provisions of GO 75-C, and as set forth in Appendix C and as more fully described by text and plans in the application.

4. Clearances shall be in accordance with GO 26-D. 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 entered into between parties. A copy of the agreement shall be filed by ACTA with the Commission's Rail Safety and Carriers Division prior to commencing construction.

6. Within 30 days after completion of the work under this order, ACTA shall notify the Commission in writing that the authorized work was 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.

The application is granted as set forth above.

Application 98-11-010 is closed.

This order is effective 30 days from today.

Dated April 1, 1999, at San Francisco, California.

RICHARD A. BILAS

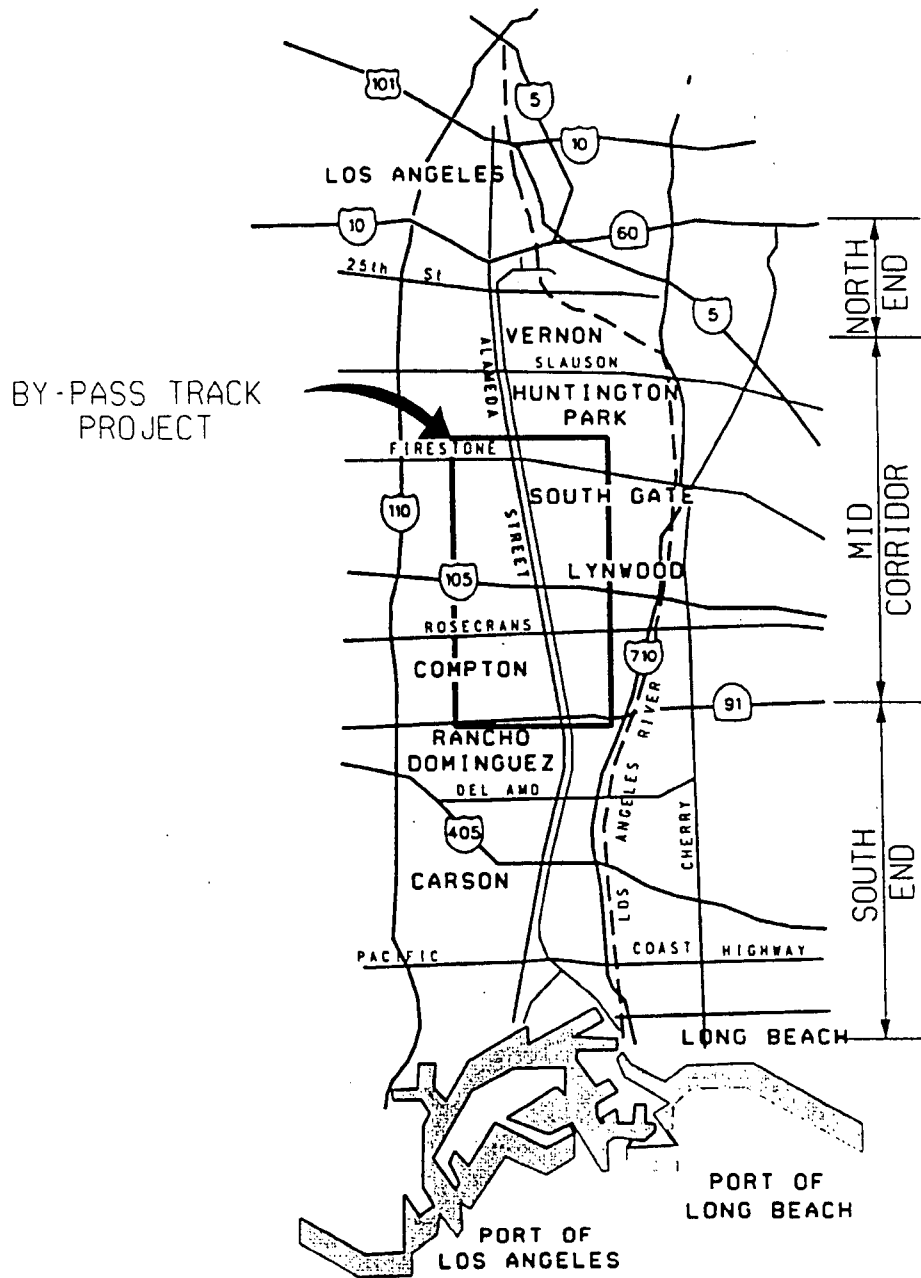
President

HENRY M. DUQUE

JOSIAH L. NEEPER

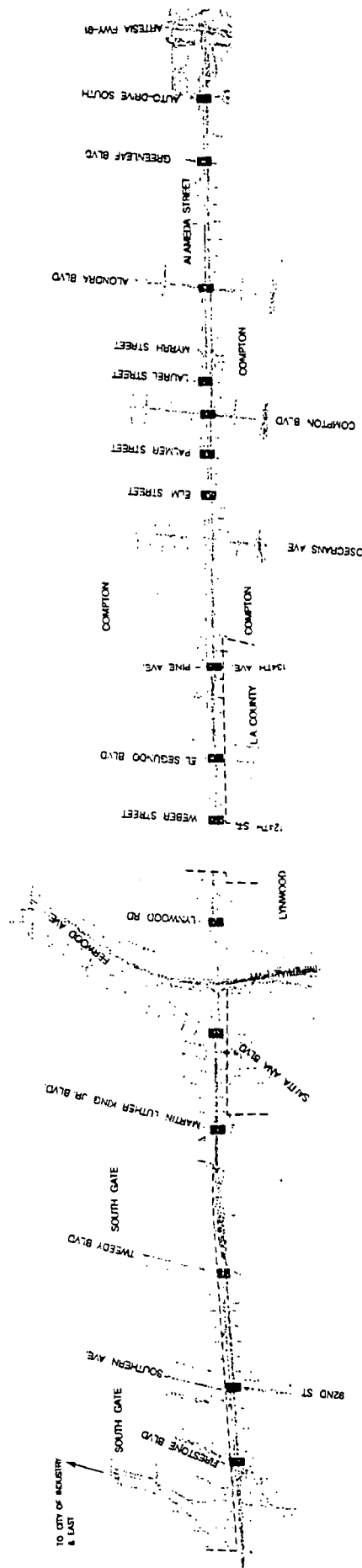
Commissioners

**APPENDIX A**



ALAMEDA CORRIDOR PROGRAM





**APPENDIX B**

As part of the project to construct the Alameda Corridor, the Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority (ACTA) proposes to construct a By-Pass Track Project, which concerns the relocation of approximately 5.6 miles of the former Southern Pacific Transportation Company San Pedro Branch Line track, now owned by ACTA and operated by the Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP). The By-Pass Track project includes relocating: (a) 17 single-track railroad-highway grade crossings, (b) two single-track railroad-highway grade separations, and (c) one single-track railroad-railroad grade separation, as set forth below:

**(a) Relocating 17 single-track railroad-highway grade crossings:**

	<u>Name of Street</u>	<u>PUC Crossing No.</u>	<u>DOT Crossing No.</u>
1.	Firestone Boulevard	BG-489.50	747658B
2.	Southern Avenue & 92 <sup>nd</sup> Street	BG-489.80	747659H
3.	Tweedy Boulevard	BG-490.30	747660C
4.	Martin Luther King Boulevard	BG-490.90	747669N
5.	Fernwood Avenue	BG-491.30	747671P
6.	Imperial Highway	BG-491.46	-
7.	Lynwood Avenue	BG-491.80	747678M
8.	Weber Street	BG-492.20	747682C
9.	El Segundo Boulevard	BG-492.40	747683J
10.	Pine Street & 134 <sup>th</sup> Street	BG-492.80	747684R
11.	Elm Street	BG-493.50	747686E
12.	Palmer Avenue	BG-493.60	747687L
13.	Compton Boulevard	BG-493.80	747688T
14.	Laurel Street	BG-494.00	747689A
15.	Alondra Boulevard	BG-494.30	747691B
16.	Greenleaf Boulevard	BG-494.80	747693P
17.	Auto Dr. South	BG-495.09	-

**(b) Relocating two single-track railroad-highway grade separations:**

	<u>Name of Street</u>	<u>PUC Crossing No.</u>	<u>DOT Crossing No.</u>
1.	I-105 Overhead	BG-491.50-A	747674K
2.	Rosecrans Avenue	BG-493-30-A	747685X

**(c) Relocating one single-track railroad-railroad grade separation:**

UP over Metro Green Line tracks:	UP M.P.	491.49
	Metro Green Line M.P.	9.00
The Metro Green Line is in Median of I-105 Freeway.		

APPENDIX C

The grade crossings will be reconstructed, eliminating existing hump in the roadway, and will have automatic gate-type signals and electronic devices to provide constant warning time for gate operation at the crossings, regardless of train speed, as set forth below:

	<u>Name of Street</u>	<u>Existing Warning Devices</u>	<u>Proposed Warning devices</u>
1.	Firestone Boulevard BG-489.50	3 No. 9	4 No. 9
2.	Southern Avenue & 92 <sup>nd</sup> Street BG-489.80	2 No. 9-A	4 No. 9 1 No. 8
3.	Tweedy Boulevard BG-490.30	2 No. 8	2 No. 9
4.	Martin Luther King Boulevard BG-490.90	2 No. 8 2 No. 8-A	2 No. 9-A 1 No. 8-A
5.	Fernwood Avenue BG-491.30	2 No. 8	2 No. 9 1 No. 8
6.	Imperial Highway BG-491.46	4 No. 9	4 No. 9
7.	Lynwood Avenue BG-491.80		2 No. 9 1 No. 8
8.	Weber Street BG-492.20	2 No. 9	2 No. 9 1 No. 8
9.	El Segundo Boulevard BG-492.40	2 No. 9-A	4 No. 9
10.	Pine Street & 134 <sup>th</sup> Street BG-492.80	2 No. 9-A	2 No. 9-A
11.	Elm Street BG-493.50	2 No. 8	2 No. 9
12.	Palmer Avenue BG-493.60	1 No. 3	2 No. 9
13.	Compton Boulevard BG-493.80	1 No. 4	2 No. 9
14.	Laurel Street BG-494.00	2 No. 8	2 No. 9
15.	Alondra Boulevard BG-494.30	2 No. 9	4 No. 9
16.	Greenleaf Boulevard BG-494.80	2 No. 8	4 No. 9
17.	Auto Dr. South BG-495.09	4 No. 9	4 No. 9