

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Rail Safety and Carriers Division
Rail Engineering Safety Branch
Rail Transit Safety Section

Resolution ST-42
Date July 8, 1999

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION ST-42. GRANTING SACRAMENTO REGIONAL TRANSIT DISTRICT (SRTD) A VARIANCE FROM RULE 37, TABLE 1, CASE 3 OF GENERAL ORDER 95 REQUIRING 19 FEET MINIMUM VERTICAL CLEARANCE OF LIGHT RAIL CONTACT WIRES ABOVE THOROUGHFARES

SUMMARY

By letter dated February 16, 1999, the Sacramento Regional Transit District (SRTD) requests a variance from Rule 37, Table 1, Case 3 of General Order (G.O.) 95 requiring 19 feet minimum vertical clearance of light rail contact wires above thoroughfares. This request is due to structural conditions at the location limiting the maximum vertical clearance to 16'-10".

BACKGROUND

SRTD is in the final design stages of an extension to the existing light rail system from the 16th and 23rd Street stations to a terminus at Meadowview Road. Tracks are designed to run parallel to Union Pacific Railroad's (UPRR) existing right-of-way and under an existing overpass that limits the maximum attainable vertical clearance. This overpass is LRT/UPRR Separation Bridge No. 24C-362 (Bee Bridge).

DISCUSSION

Sacramento Regional Transit District's proposed design calls for the operation of a double track system that crosses 19th Street main thoroughfare at an angle in a shared right-of-way and passes under the Bee Bridge which limits the vertical clearance. Since it is not practical to increase the existing clearance under the Bee Bridge to meet the minimum clearance requirement, SRTD proposes that the contact wire be located at 16'-0" while leaving 10" for uplift and tolerances. To ensure safe conditions, SRTD will warn motorists of the reduced clearance condition by installing and maintaining signs at the following locations:

- East and west sides of 19th Street adjacent to its intersections with O, P, and Q streets
- South side of Q Street just prior to the 19th Street intersection
- On the bridge itself in the direction of traffic (since 19th Street is one-way)

All signs will be in conformance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and/or Caltrans Traffic Manual. Sign nature and exact location will be determined and approved via the City of Sacramento's encroachment permit process.

Traffic entering 19th Street from O, P, and Q streets will be adequately warned of the reduced clearance condition. The maximum allowable height of any motor vehicle in California is 13' 6", and the location of warning signs gives the driver of a vehicle exceeding the maximum allowable height adequate time and distance to seek an alternate route. Therefore, the Rail Transit Safety Section (RTSS) believes the precautions proposed are adequate and recommends the approval of the variance requested.

PROTESTS

All interested parties have been advised of the contents of this resolution, and no known protest or objection has been received. This is also an uncontested matter in which the resolution 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

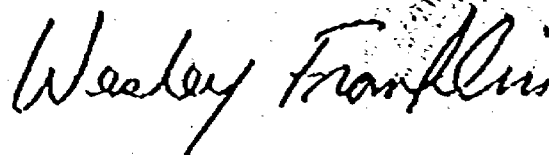
1. It is not practical to increase the clearance at the Bee Bridge overpass to meet the minimum vertical clearance requirement.
2. Traffic is adequately warned of the reduced clearance condition.
3. Requested variance to G.O. 95 in this application is safe and reasonable.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that:

SRTD is granted the variance to G.O. 95, Rule 37, Table 1, Case 3 for the specific application in which trolley contact wire is installed at the 19th street crossing under the Bee Bridge with a clearance of 16'-0" above pavement. This variance is granted with the condition that SRTD installs and maintains impaired clearance signs placed on the bridge itself, the east and west sides of 19th Street at O, P, & Q streets, and the south side of Q Street prior to the right hand turn on 19th Street. All signs must be in conformance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and/or Caltrans Traffic Manual. Sign nature and exact location will be determined and approved via the City of Sacramento's encroachment permit process.

This resolution is effective today.

I hereby certify that this resolution was adopted by the Public Utilities Commission at its regular meeting on July 8, 1999. The following Commissioners approved it.



Wesley M. Franklin
Executive Director

Richard A. Bilas
President
Henry M. Duque
Josiah L. Neeper
Joel Z. Hyatt
Carl W. Wood
Commissioners