

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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

Resolution SX-20
April 1, 1999

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION SX-20 AUTHORIZING LOS ANGELES COUNTY METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE TRAIN SIGNALS AND TRAIN SIGNS AT TWENTY LIGHT RAIL CROSSINGS ALONG WASHINGTON BOULEVARD, IN THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES, LOS ANGELES COUNTY.

Summary

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), by a letter dated May 26, 1998, has requested authority to make certain modifications to train and automotive traffic signals along Washington Boulevard and Flower Street in the City of Los Angeles, as more specifically described within the text of the letter and engineering drawings attached thereto.

MTA advises that their engineers in cooperation with the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) engineers have conducted an in-depth analysis of light rail vehicle (LRV) and automotive vehicle movements, as well as reviewing the street roadway geometrics and have determined to improve and enhance safety at the 20 crossings within the LRV corridor that traffic signal upgrading and improvements should be performed. A change in the configuration of traffic signals would reduce left turn trains versus auto conflicts.

MTA proposes to change the location of the train signal now mounted at the end of the cantilevered traffic signal arm, adjacent to the left turn traffic signals, and to change the aspect of all the train signals. It is also proposed to include at each intersection train activated signs with the illuminated word "Train" on them. The signs will be activated on the approach of trains, will flash for approximately five seconds and then display a solid train symbol. The operation of these signs will be similar to the active "NO LEFT TURN" signs. MTA expects that these new signals will help to avoid left turn accidents, which have happened along Washington Boulevard as a result of motor vehicles making left turns into the path of the light rail vehicles. The

existing train signals and train signs were approved by Commission Decision 90-03-050, which granted the authority requested by Application 88-07-033.

After a review of the factual material submitted by MTA, the Commission staff concludes that MTA's proposal is a safe and reasonable alternative to the train signals and train signs approved by Commission Decision 90-03-050.

Discussion

MTA is the primary provider of transit-related services for the Southern California region. MTA was created in the state legislature by Assembly Bill 152 in May 1992. This bill merged the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (LACTC) and the Southern California Rapid Transit District (RTD) to become the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. The merger became effective on February 1, 1993.

MTA is governed by a 13-member Board of Directors comprised of the five Los Angeles County Supervisors, the mayor of Los Angeles, three Los Angeles mayor-appointed members, four city council members representing the other 87 cities in Los Angeles County. One non-voting member is appointed by the Governor of California.

MTA oversees all regional bus and rail operations; planning and construction of a countywide rail system; development of effective transportation policies and a long-range plan; programming of federal, state and local revenues for public transit, transportation demand management, bikeways, and highway projects of Los Angeles County; and coordination of activities among the county's many transportation agencies.

MTA maintains an integrated transportation network called the Metro System which includes bus and rail services, transportation demand management, bikeways, and highway improvements designed to make getting around the region easier and more economical. At the same time, the Metro System helps the Los Angeles region meet its goals for reducing air pollution.

LADOT is responsible for the development of programs and implementation of solutions to meet the ground transportation needs of Los Angeles traveling public and commerce. The Department has centralized authority over the conceptual planning and operation of the City's street system; is responsible for the installation and maintenance of traffic signals; parking meters, and other traffic control devices; regulates taxicabs, ambulances and other for-hire vehicles; administers provisions of franchises; manages off-street parking facilities and regulates off-street parking, intersection control, parking enforcement and provides crossing guard services; plans, and other related transportation matters.

The MTA Blue Line is a twenty mile light rail system running from downtown Los Angeles to downtown Long Beach. The Washington Boulevard section has two light rail tracks running at street level, separated from the vehicular lanes by a curb. At the twenty intersections, however, both motor vehicles and light rail vehicles cross the intersection. The traffic signals and train signals are designed to prevent collisions at these intersections. Occasionally, however, motor vehicles do not obey the traffic signals and collisions occur. MTA believes that the new train signals and illuminated train signs will be an improvement over the existing train signals and train signs.

Upon review of material submitted by MTA, as well as an onsite inspection of the crossings, the Rail Safety and Carriers Division staff are in agreement with MTA's and LADOT's proposal to modify the traffic signals along the Washington Boulevard Blue Line Corridor.

Protests

There are no protests at this time. City of Los Angeles and Commission staff support this proposal.

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

1. MTA requests authority to improve the configuration of traffic-train signals along Washington Boulevard and Flower Street LRV Metro Blue Line Corridor in the City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County.

2. The City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) has reviewed the street and roadway geometrics, considered the operation of vehicular and LRV train traffic and concurs with the proposed installation of signals at the crossings.

3. MTA and LADOT field studies indicate proposed changes to the location of the train signal now mounted at the end of the cantilevered traffic signal arm to the new location indicated on Exhibit A attached to this resolution will reduce left turn vehicular-train accidents.

4. Commission staff has reviewed the MTA proposal and finds that the request has merit.

Conclusion of Law

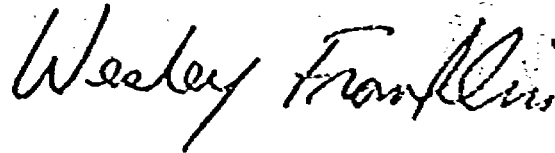
MTA's request to improve the train signals and train signs at twenty crossings along Washington Boulevard should be granted.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that:

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) be granted authority to improve the train signals and train signs at twenty crossings along Washington Boulevard, as shown on the plans attached to the MTA proposal and Appendix A of this Resolution.

This resolution is effective today.

I hereby certify that this resolution was adopted by the Public Utilities Commission at its regular conference on April 1, 1999. The following Commissioners voting favorably thereon:



WESLEY M. FRANKLIN
Executive Director

RICHARD A. BILAS
President
HENRY M. DUQUE
JOSIAH L. NEEPER
Commissioners

TYPICAL LRT AND TRAFFIC SIGNALS

NOTE: LRT T.S. HEAD, DETAIL 'C'
TO BE MOUNTED ON REVERSE SIDE
OF FIBER OPTIC SIGN, DETAIL 'B'
FACING IN OPPOSITE DIRECTION.

