

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

180 PROMENADE CIRCLE, SUITE 115
SACRAMENTO, CA 95834



July 20, 2010

File Number: G.10-06-007

David R. Anderson
Project Manager
North Coast Railroad Authority
419 Talmage Rd., Suite M
Ukiah, CA 95482

Re: General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Alter the Grant Avenue Highway-Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing No. 005-27.90, DOT No. 863498G, in the City of Novato, Marin County

Dear Mr. Anderson:

This refers to your letter received by us on June 10, 2010 requesting authorization by the North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA), pursuant to Commission General Order (GO) 88-B, to alter an at-grade highway-rail crossing of the Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART) track in the City of Novato, County of Marin. The crossing is identified as Grant Avenue Highway-Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing No. 005-27.90, DOT No. 863498G.

The crossing is currently a single track crossing equipped with two Commission Standard 9-A (flashing light signal assembly with automatic gate arm and additional flashing light signals over the roadway on a cantilevered arm) warning devices. The northwest quadrant Commission Standard 9A warning device has the cantilever over southbound Railroad Avenue and an extra set of flashing lights aimed toward northbound Railroad Avenue, however, the gate arm is oriented to block westbound Grant Avenue. At this location, Grant Avenue is a two-lane road running east/west. There is currently no rail service at this crossing. However, rail service is expected to begin in Fall 2010, running approximately 6 trains per week at a maximum speed of 45 mph.

The proposed alteration as indicated in the request letter and/or shown in the attachments shall consist of upgrading the track circuitry and adding an additional set of flashers on the northwest quadrant cantilever unit for eastbound traffic. The existing 8" incandescent flasher units shall be replaced with 12" LED's. A new HXP-3 constant warning time predictor shall also be installed as part of this project.

NCRA states in its GO88-B request letter that the project will improve public safety.

Staff has investigated NCRA's request, and finds it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As NCRA, SMART and the City of Novato are in agreement as to the design and apportionments of the cost under the provisions of GO 88-B, you may proceed with the improvements as described in your request letter and attachments, and summarized above.

Temporary traffic controls shall be provided in compliance with section 8A.05, Temporary Traffic Control Zones, of the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD), published by the California Department of Transportation.

All parties shall comply with all applicable rules, including Commission General Orders and CA MUTCD.

This project is categorically exempt from the requirements of the California Environment Quality Act of 1970, as amended [California Public Resources Code 21084].

This authorization shall expire if the above conditions are not complied with or if the work is not completed within two years of the date of this letter. Upon written request to this office, the time to complete the project may be extended. Any written request for a time extension must include concurrence letters by involved parties in support of the time extension. If an extension is requested, the Commission's Rail Crossings Engineering Section (RCES) may reevaluate the crossing prior to granting an extension.

Within 30 days after completion of this project, NCRA shall notify RCES that the authorized work is completed, by submitting a completed Commission Standard Form G titled *Report of Changes at Highway Grade Crossings and Separations*. Form G requirements and forms can be obtained at the CPUC web site Form G page at <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/static/transportation/crossings/formg.htm>. This report may be submitted electronically to rces@cpuc.ca.gov as outlined on the web page.

If you have any questions, please contact David Stewart at (916) 928-2515 or atm@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Daren Gilbert, Supervisor
Rail Crossings Engineering Section
Consumer Protection and Safety Division

C: Lillian Hames, SMART
Jason Nutt, City of Novato