

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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September 17, 2010

Leonard Guillette
Deputy Director of Engineering
City of Atwater
750 Bellevue Road
Atwater, CA 95301

File No. G.10-08-007

Re: General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Alter Applegate Road Highway–Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing 001B-142.90, DOT No. 766165P in the City of Atwater, Merced County.

Dear Mr. Guillette:

This refers to your letter dated August 17, 2010, and received by us on August 24, 2010, requesting authorization pursuant to Commission General Order (GO) 88-B, to alter an at-grade highway-rail crossing of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) tracks in the City of Atwater (City), Merced County. The crossing is identified as Applegate Road Highway-Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing No.001B-142.90, DOT No. 766165P.

Applegate Road, which becomes Winton Way north of the signalized intersection (Applegate Road/Winton Way/Atwater Boulevard) adjacent to the crossing, is an urban three-lane, often congested, principal roadway at the crossing. The crossing is located in a commercial area, less than a quarter of a mile from the State Route (SR) 99/Applegate Road interchange. The crossing has two tracks, one main and one siding, frequented by UPRR freight trains. There are no medians at the crossing. There is a sidewalk across the track on the east side of Applegate Road. The crossing is 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 City states in its GO 88-B request letter, “The intersection is experiencing congestion during peak hours of the day due its proximity to the interchange of SR 99/Applegate Road. It is one of two routes that provide access to SR 99 for most of the City of Atwater. The interim benefit to these improvements is an increase in capacity by adding additional turn lanes on Applegate Road, Atwater Boulevard, and Winton Way. Additionally, an increase of railroad warning time (including advanced preemption), signs and striping is proposed to further increase safety.”

The proposed alterations, as indicated in the request letter and/or shown on the plans, shall consist of:

- Installing new traffic signals at the Applegate Road/Winton Way/Atwater Boulevard intersection. Signal phasing operations include a proposed railroad dwell sequence to

continue operations (for movement of traffic not headed across the tracks) during railroad preemption;

- installing railroad advance preemption of the traffic signals. The City has calculated a total railroad warning time of 38 seconds; however, the actual preemption time will be further reviewed and evaluated by the City, UPRR, and CPUC Staff before implementation;
- construction of a 1 foot wide raised median on both sides of the crossing per plan;
- installing curb and gutter per plan;
- installing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standard detectable warning (tactile strip) surfaces on the sidewalk approaches to the crossing with the nearest edge, 1 foot in advance of the warning device and a minimum of 12 feet from the nearest rail, on the south and north side of the crossing, respectively. Staff has contacted the City and they have agreed to annotate the tactile strips on a revised plan;
- constructing a 200 foot long southbound right turn lane on Winton Way;
- reducing the angles (to improve traffic lane alignment) across the intersection for eastbound and westbound traffic on Atwater Boulevard;
- changing the westbound right turn lane on Atwater Boulevard to a combined through-right turn lane;
- increasing the length of the eastbound right turn lane on Atwater Boulevard per plan;
- constructing a northbound right turn flare from Applegate Road to Atwater Boulevard;
- installing signage and striping per plan.

Staff has investigated the request by the City, and finds it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As the City and UPRR 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 (CAMUTCD), published by Caltrans.

All parties shall comply with all applicable rules, including Commission General Orders, and the CAMUTCD.

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. A written request for a time extension must include concurrence letters by interested parties in support of the time extension. If an extension is requested, staff from 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, the City 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/formg>. This report may be submitted electronically to rces@cpuc.ca.gov as outlined on the web page.

If you have any questions, please contact Marvin Kennix at (916) 928-3809 or email at mlk@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Daren Gilbert, Supervisor
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Consumer Protection and Safety Division

Cc:

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