

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

515 L Street, Suite 1119
Sacramento, CA 95814



September 14, 2010

File Number: G.10-08-013
City of Santa Paula, County of Ventura

John Quinn
Director of Public Works
City of Santa Paula
PO Box 569
970 Ventura Street
Santa Paula, CA 93060

Re: General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Modify the Palm Avenue At-Grade Highway-Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing No. 001BE-413.90, DOT No. 745718B, in the City of Santa Paula, Ventura County.

Dear Mr. Quinn:

This refers to your letter, dated August 12, 2010 (received August 19, 2010), requesting authorization, pursuant to Commission General Order (GO) 88-B, to modify the existing at-grade crossing of the Ventura County Transit Commission (VCTC) railroad tracks at Palm Avenue, in City of Santa Paula, Ventura County, identified as CPUC Crossing Number 001BE-413.90.

The single track crossing is currently a divided roadway, one lane of northbound traffic and two lanes of southbound traffic. The Palm Avenue crossing is immediately adjacent to Main Street, which parallels the tracks just south of the railroad right-of-way. The Palm Avenue and Main Street intersection is signalized. The crossing is equipped with two curb mounted Commission Standard 9 warning devices (Flashing Light Signal Assembly with automatic gate arm). The City of Santa Paula (the City) proposes to make certain modifications to the crossing to accommodate the Santa Paula Branch Line Recreational Trail pedestrian-bike trail.

Fillmore Western Railway (FWRY) operates 6 freight trains and 1 maintenance train per week over this VCTC line. An Average Annual Daily Traffic (ADT) count of 5700 occurs at the crossing.

The City proposes the following alterations:

- Upgrade the existing flashers to incandescent 12" LED light heads for improved visibility;
- Realignment of curbs on both sides of the crossing, and elimination of the southbound exclusive right turn lane on Palm Avenue, resulting in a single southbound traffic lane;
- Reapplication of MUTCD compliant pavement markings;
- Addition of R13A (CA) "No Right Turn on Red" sign for westbound Main Street at Palm;
- Addition of crosswalk across Palm Avenue, north of the crossing, for trail users;

- Removal of siding track through the crossing;
- Relocate Commission Standard 9 warning device in the N/W quadrant closer to the crossing, a minimum of 12 feet from the centerline of the tracks, and reorient arm parallel with tracks;
- Install/reorient flashers on the Commission Standard 9 warning devices in the N/W quadrant and the S/E quadrant to address both bike trail approaches;
- Install/relocate Right-of-way fence to meet with the east curb of Palm Avenue on the east side of the crossing and to the sidewalk edge on the west side of the crossing;
- Signage to include; W10-3 (tracks parallel to "T" intersection) on Main St approaching the crossing, R1-1 (Stop) at both ends of the trail, "Stop Here When Flashing Lights" (R8-10) between the end of the east bound trail and the tracks, "LOOK" (R15-8) for both approaches, "Trail Crossing" (W11-1) for south bound Palm Ave, "Use Crosswalk" (R9-3b) between the trail and the tracks on the west side, at the trail intersection with the west sidewalk; and
- Installation of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant detectable warning tactile strips on all sidewalk approaches. Placement: a minimum of 36 inches in the direction of travel over the full width of the sidewalk, 2 feet in front of the warning device (where present), but no closer than 15 feet from the centerline of the tracks.

The Commission's Rail Crossings Engineering Section (RCES) investigated the request filed by the City, and finds it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As the City, VCTC and FWRV are in agreement as to the design and apportionments of the cost under the provisions of GO 88-B, the improvements as described in your letter dated August 12, 2010 and summarized above are authorized.

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 the CA MUTCD.

This project is categorically exempt from the requirements of the California Environment Quality Act of 1970, as amended. [California Pubic 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, 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 Sergio Licon at (213) 576-7085 or sal@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daren Gilbert". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "D" and "G".

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

c: Mary Travis, Rail Manager, VCTC
David Wilkinson, Fillmore and Western Railway