

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

180 Promenade Circle, Suite 115
SACRAMENTO, CA 95834-2939



December 22, 2010

File Number: G.10-12-001

Benjamin H. Scharf
Senior Assistant Council
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
3331 North First Street
San Jose, CA 95134-1927

Re: General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Alter the Highway 680 Northbound Onramp and Capitol Avenue At-Grade Highway-Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing No. 82C-8.75, in the City of San Jose, County of Santa Clara

Dear Mr. Scharf:

This refers to your letter dated November 23, 2010 and received by us on December 6, 2010 requesting authorization pursuant to Commission General Order (GO) 88-B to alter an at-grade highway-rail crossing of the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) light rail track in the city of San Jose (City), County of Santa Clara (County). The crossing is located at the Highway 680 Northbound Onramp and Capitol Avenue intersection and is identified as CPUC Crossing No. 82C-8.75.

The VTA alignment is median running along Capitol Avenue. The crossing is currently a double track at-grade crossing traveling north and south on Capitol Avenue. Southbound Capitol Avenue has one left turn lane which travels through the crossing.

VTA states in its GO 88-B request letter that "The crossing modification proposed in this request will assist in controlling driver behavior and enhance overall safety, at this crossing. Additional signage and traffic control markers will alert motorists of an LRT median alignment and enhance warning for left-turning motorists."

The modification of this crossing is part of VTA's Light Rail Left Hand Turn and Track Intrusion Project Phase 2. Phase 1 of the project was completed in 2009. This project's goal is to reduce the number of left turn and track intrusion incidents along this corridor through the implementation of several measures specifically designed to mitigate these types of events. These measures include installation of pavement markings, retro-reflective markers, lane striping, a combination W10-7 "Trolley Approaching" sign and R3-2 "No Left Turn" active warning sign, and relocation of left turn lane stop lines away from the intersection on parallel roadways to tracks. This crossing is one of the sixteen VTA crossings involved in this project.

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

- Installation of new pavement markings in the southbound Capitol Avenue left turn pocket consisting of a text “LEFT TURN ONLY” pavement marking, a left turn arrow pavement marking, and an “RxR” pavement marking. These new pavement markings shall be installed behind the existing left-turn arrow.
- Installation of pavement markings in the westernmost northbound Capitol Avenue lane consisting of a straight arrow pavement marking accompanied by a text “ONLY” pavement marking.
- Replacement of the existing W10-7 “Trolley Approaching” active warning signs on Capitol Avenue for southbound traffic with one combination active warning signs alternating between the W10-7 trolley icon and an R3-2 “No Left Turn” flashing image.
- Installation of lane guidance striping and raised reflective markers across the tracks for the left turn lane from the southbound Capitol Avenue to the Highway 680 Northbound Onramp to deter vehicles from entering the light rail right of way.
- Extension of the curb adjacent to the southbound Capitol Avenue left turn pocket an additional 13 feet to align with the existing stop bar.
- Installation of six Type Q markers on the north side median of the crossing to delineate the light rail alignment.
- Installation of a Type K marker between the two tracks on the south leg of the crossing.
- Replacement of the existing R73-2 “Left Turn/U-Turn” sign for southbound Capitol Avenue traffic with a R73-3 “Left Turn” arrow/“No U-Turn” combination sign to reduce the number of motorists making U-Turns at the crossing.

Staff has investigated the request by VTA, and finds it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As VTA and the City 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 10A.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

Benjamin Scharf
G.10-12-001
December 22, 2010
Page 3 of 3

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, VTA 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 Felix Ko at (415) 703-3722 or fko@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 initial "D" and "G".

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

C: Manuel Cota
Principal Engineering Technician
Planning & Project Delivery Division
City of San Jose
200 East Santa Clara Street
San Jose, CA 95113-1905