

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

180 PROMENADE CIRCLE, SUITE 115
SACRAMENTO, CA 95834



September 7, 2011

File Number: G.11-07-007
City of Visalia, County of Tulare

Andrew Benelli
Public Works Director
City of Visalia
315 E. Acequia Avenue
Visalia, CA 93291

Re: General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Modify the Santa Fe Avenue Highway-Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing No. 103V-23.70, DOT No. 028870H in the City of Visalia, Tulare County.

Dear Mr. Benelli:

This refers to your letter, dated July 15, 2011 (received July 18, 2011), requesting authorization, pursuant to Commission General Order (GO) 88-B, to modify the existing at-grade crossing of the San Joaquin Valley Railroad (SJVR) Loma Spur and Santa Fe Avenue in the City of Visalia, Tulare County. The crossing is identified by CPUC Crossing No. 103V-23.70, DOT No. 028870H.

Santa Fe Avenue is a two lane roadway over one SJVR spur track. The crossing is currently equipped with one Commission Standard 1 (non-reflectorized crossbuck sign on post) and two Commission Standard 1-R (reflectorized crossbuck sign on post) signs, pavement markings and advanced warning signage. SJVR operates 2 freight trains a week over this line at less than five mph. An Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) count of 6,000 occurs at the crossing.

As part of the City's Federal Transportation Enhancement grant to build a Class I bike/pedestrian path adjacent to Santa Fe Avenue and across the crossing, the City proposes safety enhancements to the north side of the crossing. No modifications are proposed to the vehicular roadway as part of this project.

City proposes to make the following modifications to the crossing:

- Construct a Class I bike/pedestrian pathway on the north side of the crossing;
- Install one Commission Standard No. 1-D (PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE ONLY sign on a post) for the northbound pathway approach in the southwest quadrant of the crossing;

- Install one Commission Standard No. 1-D for the southbound pathway approach in the northwest quadrant of the crossing;
- Install pedestrian “zig zag” channelization for adjacent bike trail on both approaches to crossing designed such that the pathway user faces each direction along the tracks while approaching the crossing;
- Install fencing along the right of way and pathway to channel pathway users along the crossing approaches to prevent trespassing, as shown on plans;
- Install Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant detectable warning tactile strips for both approaches to the crossing on the north pathway;
- Install a “WALK YOUR BIKE ACROSS TRACKS” sign and a R1-1 “STOP” sign at both north side crossing approaches; and
- Application of MUTCD compliant pavement markings and signage, including W10-1 advance warning signs and RXR pavement markings.

SJVR by electronic mail has indicated its acceptance of no modifications being made to the vehicular approaches to the crossing and are satisfied with the current warning signs of one Commission Standard No. 1 and two Commission Standard No. 1-Rs.

The Commission’s Rail Crossings Engineering Section (RCES) investigated the request filed by the City of Visalia and finds it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As the City and SJVR are both in agreement as to the design and apportionments of the cost under the provisions of GO 88-B, the improvements as described in your request dated July 15, 2011 and summarized above are authorized.

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 three 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 of Visalia 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.

SJVR should submit an updated FRA inventory form to the Federal Railroad Administration, reflecting the changes. CPUC requests a concurrent copy of the updated inventory form be submitted to rces@cpuc.ca.gov .

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, stylized "D" and "G".

Daren Gilbert, Manager
Rail Transit and Crossings Branch
Consumer Protection and Safety Division

C: Victor Castillo, SJVR
Marc Bader, SJVR
Michael Carr, City of Visalia