

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

180 PROMENADE CIRCLE, SUITE 115
SACRAMENTO, CA 95834



July 16, 2012

File Number: G.12-06-002

Bill Gamlen P.E.
Chief Engineer
Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit
490 Mendocino Ave., Suite 102
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

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

Dear Mr. Gamlen:

This refers to your letter dated May 31, 2012 and received by us on June 4, 2012 requesting authorization, pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) General Order (GO) 88-B, to alter the at-grade crossing of Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) track in the City of Novato (City), Marin County. The crossing is identified as the Grant Avenue Highway-Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing No. 005-27.90 and DOT No. 863498G.

The crossing is currently a single track crossing equipped with two curb mounted Commission Standard 9A (flashing light signal assembly with automatic gate arm and additional flashing light signals over the roadway on a cantilevered arm) warning devices in the City. Northwestern Pacific Railroad Company (NWP) runs approximately 6 freight trains per week at a maximum speed of 25 mph over the crossing.

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

- Replace existing train detection circuitry with a GE XP4 predictor to provide constant warning;
- Install a Commission Standard 9-E (flashing light signal assembly with automatic gate installed on the departure side of the at-grade crossing, also known as an exit gate) and loop vehicle detectors eastbound;
- Install a 2 foot wide, 62 foot long non-mountable raised median on the west side of the crossing;
- Install Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant sidewalks across the tracks on the north and south sides of Grant Avenue;

- Install ADA compliant detectable warning strips on all sidewalk approaches, located a minimum of 12 feet from the centerline of the track;
- Install concrete crossing panels;
- Replace existing equipment case with a new 8 foot by 8 foot Central Instrument Location signal house;
- Install new street signage and striping as shown on plans.

Although the Multi-Use Path (MUP) is shown on the plan, this letter does not provide Commission approval for any MUP work. The MUP project will be reviewed and addressed separately from the proposed alterations described above.

SMART states in its GO88-B request letter that “The proposed alterations will provide for increased public safety at this location.”

Commission’s Rail Crossing Engineering Section (RCES) staff (Staff) has investigated the SMART request, and finds it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As SMART 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 8A.05, Temporary Traffic Control Zones, of the 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 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, the Commission’s RCES may reevaluate the crossing prior to granting an extension.

Within 30 days after completion of this project, the SMART shall notify RCES that the authorized work is completed, by submitting a completed Commission Standard Form G. 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.

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At the conclusion of the project, SMART should submit an updated Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) inventory form to the FRA, reflecting the changes. Commission requests a concurrent copy of the updated inventory form be submitted to rccs@cpuc.ca.gov.

If you have any questions, please contact David Stewart at (916) 928-2515 or atm@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, Manager
Rail Transit and Crossings Branch
Consumer Protection and Safety Division

C: Mitch Stogner, NCRA
Jason Nutt, City of Novato