

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

180 PROMENADE CIRCLE, SUITE 115
SACRAMENTO, CA 95834



July 10, 2012

File Number: G.12-06-011
National City, County of San Diego

Chip Finch
Project Manager
San Diego Association of Governments
401 B Street, Suite 900
San Diego, CA 92101

Re: **General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Alter the Civic Center Drive At-grade Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing No. 036-4.90 and DOT No. 661808P in National City, San Diego County.**

Dear Mr. Finch:

This refers to your letter dated May 18, 2012 (received May 23, 2012), requesting authority, pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) General Order (GO) 88-B, to modify the existing at-grade crossing of San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway (SDAE) Mainline 36 tracks and Civic Center Drive in National City (City), San Diego County. The crossing is identified as CPUC Crossing Number 036-4.90 and DOT Number 661808P.

The Civic Center Drive at-grade crossing is a two lane roadway, one in each direction that crosses over two SDAE mainline tracks. The crossing is currently equipped with two Commission Standard 9 (flashing light signal assembly with automatic gate arm) and two Commission Standard 8 (flashing light signal assembly) warning devices, pavement markings and advanced warning signage. The northbound Interstate 5 off-ramp to West Plaza Boulevard, as well as portions of the northbound freeway traffic lanes cross over the tracks and Civic Center Drive at approximately the crossing location. In addition to freight trains, San Diego Trolley Inc. (SDTI) operates light rail trains over the SDAE mainline. . Approximately four (4) freight trains per day at a maximum speed of 40 MPH, typically at night, and one hundred ninety-six (196) light rail trains per day at a maximum speed of 55 MPH operate over this portion of the mainline. The average daily traffic count at this crossing is 5,993 vehicles.

San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) proposes the following modifications to the Civic Center Drive crossing as part of the Blue Line Crossovers Project that proposes improvements along this corridor:

- Remove the two existing curb mounted Commission Standard 9 warning devices;
- Remove the two existing median mounted Commission Standard 8 warning devices;
- Install one new curb mounted and one new median mounted Commission Standard 9 warning devices on the northeast quadrant of the crossing for westbound Civic Center Drive;

- Install one new curb mounted and one new median mounted Commission Standard 9 warning devices in the southwest quadrant of the crossing for eastbound Civic Center Drive;
- Construct a new raised median 8-inches in height, 9-feet in width, and 65-feet in length for the eastbound approach to the crossing;
- Construct a new raised median 8-inches in height, 9-feet in width, and 65-feet in length for the westbound approach to the crossing;
- Construct Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complaint sidewalks on both sides of the crossing;
- Install ADA compliant detectable warning tactile strips on all sidewalk approaches to the crossing;
- Install new left turn pocket with pavement delineation and striping for the northbound Interstate 5 on-ramp entrance and to accommodate the new median east of the crossing; and
- Install California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) compliant signage and pavement markings, including W10-1 advance warning signs, W48 (CA) 2 tracks signs, R 8-8 'DO NOT STOP ON TRACKS' signage, KEEP CLEAR pavement markings and RXR pavement markings, as shown in plans.

The Commission's Rail Crossings Engineering Section (RCES) investigated the request filed by SANDAG and finds it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As SANDAG, SDAE and the City 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 request dated May 18, 2012 and summarized above are authorized.

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 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 three years of the date of this letter. Upon written request to RCES, 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, SANDAG and/or SDAE 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.

At the conclusion of the project, SDAE must also submit an updated FRA inventory form to the Federal Railroad Administration, reflecting the changes. Commission 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, flowing style.

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

- C: Stephan Manganiello – Traffic Engineer, National City
Paul Jablonski – Chief Executive Officer, Metropolitan Transit System, and
Chief Executive Officer, Metropolitan Transit System (for SDTI)
Amy L. Vargas, Traffic Engineer – California Department of Transportation, Caltrans