

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

180 PROMENADE CIRCLE, SUITE 115
SACRAMENTO, CA 95834



July 26, 2012

File Number: G.12-07-001

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 West College Avenue Highway-Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing No. 005-54.40 and DOT No. 498564L in the City of Santa Rosa, Sonoma County

Dear Mr. Gamlen:

This refers to your letter dated July 5, 2012, received by us on July 6, 2012, requesting authorization, pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) General Order (GO) 88-B, to alter the West College Avenue at-grade crossing of Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) track in the City of Santa Rosa (City), Sonoma County. The crossing is identified as CPUC Crossing No. 005-54.40 and DOT No. 498564L.

The West College Avenue 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.. Northwestern Pacific Railroad Company (NWP) runs approximately 6 freight trains per week at a maximum speed of 25 mph over the crossing. North Coast Railroad Authority (NCRA) is the State agency charged with bringing freight operations to the Highway 101 corridor. NWP is the freight operator contracted by NCRA. SMART will begin rail transit passenger service beginning in 2014.

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

- Replacing existing train detection circuitry with a GE XP4 predictor to provide constant warning;
- Installing a new siding track with a concrete panel surface 15 feet west of the existing mainline track;
- Relocating the existing eastbound Commission Standard 9A warning device to accommodate the new siding track;
- Installing a Commission Standard 8 (flashing light signal assembly) warning device in the northwest quadrant;

- Replacing both entry gate arms;
- Replacing all existing flashers with 12 inch Light Emitting Diode (LED) flashers and replace all gate lights with LED modules;
- Installing a Commission Standard 9-E warning device (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 in the eastbound direction;
- Installing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant sidewalks across the tracks on the north and south sides of West College Avenue with ADA compliant detectable warning strips on all sidewalk approaches, located a minimum of 12 feet from the centerline of the track;
- Constructing a 2 foot wide, 65 foot long non mountable median on the west side of the crossing;
- Constructing a 2 foot wide, 15 foot long non mountable median on the east side of the crossing;
- Constructing curb and gutters in the northwest, northeast, and southeast quadrants;
- Replacing the existing equipment case with a new 8 foot by 8 foot Central Instrument Location signal house;
- Installing new street signage and striping as shown on plans.

Simultaneous to the SMART project, the City will construct a controlled pedestrian/bicycle crossing across West College Avenue adjacent to the east side of the crossing. The crosswalk will run parallel to the crossing, outside the crossing gates. This project will consist of:

- Installing two traffic signal poles and mast arms with signal heads;
- Installing three near side traffic signal poles with signal heads;
- Installing two pedestrian push button poles with pedestrian push buttons;
- Installing controller cabinet and service cabinet;
- Installing “Queue Cutter” loops east of the tracks for eastbound traffic flow that change the signal at the railroad crossing to red to relieve traffic backing onto the tracks;
- Striped crosswalk and stop bars;
- Installing R10-6 (Stop Here On Red) Signs on West College Avenue for eastbound and westbound vehicle traffic in advance of the crossing;
- Constructing of ADA compliant pedestrian ramps for the crosswalk with ADA compliant detectable warning strips crossing;
- Installing a railroad pre-emption controller panel and 12 conductor signal cable up to SMART’s Central Instrument Location signal house.

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 has investigated the SMART request, and finds it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As SMART, NCRA 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, attachments, and summarized above.

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 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 RCES may reevaluate the crossing prior to granting an extension.

Within 30 days after completion of this project, 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.

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 rces@cpuc.ca.gov.

If you have any questions, please contact David Stewart at (916) 928-2515 or atm@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



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

C: Mitch Stogner, NCRA
Rick Moshier, City of Santa Rosa