

## PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

320 W. 4<sup>TH</sup> STREET, SUITE 500  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90013



October 22, 2012

File Number: G.12-07-002  
City of San Diego, 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 Palm Avenue At-grade Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing No. 036-11.10 and DOT No. 662042N in the City of San Diego, San Diego County.**

Dear Mr. Finch:

This refers to your letter dated July 2, 2012, received by us on July 3, 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 Palm Avenue in the City of San Diego (City), San Diego County. The crossing is identified as CPUC Crossing Number 036-11.10 and DOT Number 662042N.

Additional information regarding the traffic signal phasing to process the request was received by us on October 12, 2012.

The Palm Avenue at-grade crossing is currently a five lane roadway, two in each direction, and one turning lane, which crosses over two SDAE mainline tracks. The crossing is currently equipped with three Commission Standard 9 (flashing light signal assembly with automatic gate arm) warning devices, pavement markings and advanced warning signage. Hollister Street runs parallel to the tracks and is the traffic signal controlled intersection with Palm Avenue just west of the crossing. 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 21,150 vehicles.

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

- Remove the existing two curb mounted and one median mounted Commission Standard 9 devices;

- Install one new curb mounted Commission Standard 9-A (flashing light signal assembly with automatic gate arm and additional flashing lights signals over the roadway on a cantilevered arm) and one new median mounted Commission Standard 9 warning devices in the northeast quadrant of the crossing for westbound Palm Avenue. Curb mounted device to be equipped with a pair of additional flashing lights aimed for pedestrian traffic leaving the adjacent station;
- Install one new curb mounted and one new median mounted Commission Standard 9 warning devices in the southwest quadrant of the crossing for eastbound Palm Avenue. Median mounted device to be equipped with a pair of additional flashing lights aimed for traffic along the eastbound Hollister Street approach;
- Construct a new raised median 8-inch in height, 9-feet in width, and 31-feet in length for eastbound approach to the crossing;
- Construct a new raised median 8-inch in height, 9-feet in width tapered to 2- inches in width to allow for a left turn pocket into the station, and 100-feet in length for westbound Palm Avenue;
- 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; and
- Install California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) compliant signage and pavement markings, including W10-1 and W10-2 advance warning signs, W48 (CA) 2 tracks signs, R4-7 "KEEP RIGHT" signage, R8-8 "DO NOT STOP ON TRACKS" signage, R3-4 "NO U TURN", 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 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 letter dated July 2, 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 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, RCES may reevaluate the crossing prior to granting an extension.

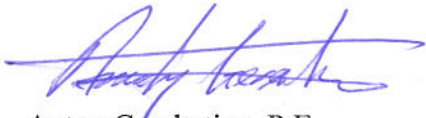


Within 30 days after completion of this project, SANDAG and/or SDAE shall notify RCES that the authorized work is completed, by submitting a completed Commission Standard Form G titled *Report of Changes at Highway Grade Crossings and Separations*. Form G requirements and forms can be obtained at the CPUC web site Form G page at <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/formg>. This report may be submitted electronically to [rces@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto: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](mailto:rces@cpuc.ca.gov).

If you have any questions, please contact Sergio Licon at (213) 576-7085 or [sal@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:sal@cpuc.ca.gov).

Sincerely,



Anton Garabetian, P.E.  
Program and Project Supervisor  
Rail Crossings Engineering Section  
Consumer Protection and Safety Division

C: Julie Ballesteros – Deputy City Engineer, City of San Diego  
Paul Jablonski – Chief Executive Officer, Metropolitan Transit System, and  
Chief Executive Officer, Metropolitan Transit System (for SDTI)