

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

180 PROMENADE CIRCLE, SUITE 115
SACRAMENTO, CA 95834



August 28, 2012

File Number: G.12-08-024
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 East Park Avenue At-grade Highway-Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing No. 036-14.13 and DOT No. 966233R in the City of San Diego, San Diego County.

Dear Mr. Finch:

This refers to your letter dated July 20, 2012 received by us July 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 East Park Avenue in the City of San Diego (City), San Diego County. The crossing is identified as CPUC Crossing Number 036-14.13 and DOT Number 966233R. Additional information regarding the assigned DOT number needed to process the request was received by Commission staff on August 15, 2012.

The East Park Avenue at-grade crossing is currently a one way two lane roadway, in the northbound direction, which crosses over two SDAE mainline tracks. The crossing is currently equipped with one Commission Standard 9 (flashing light signal assembly with automatic gate arm) warning device and pavement markings. 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 6,120 vehicles.

San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) proposes the following modifications to the East Park Avenue crossing as part of the Blue Line Crossovers Project:

- Remove the existing Commission Standard 9 warning device on the southeast quadrant of the crossing;
- Install a new curb mounted Commission Standard 9 warning device for northbound East Park Avenue, in the southwest quadrant of the crossing;
- Install a new curb mounted Commission Standard 9 warning device for northbound East Park Avenue, in the southeast quadrant of the crossing;

- Construct a new driveway in the northeast quadrant of the crossing to provide access to a private property adjoining the railroad property, per plans;
- Construct a new driveway in the northwest quadrant of the crossing to provide access to a proposed new signal house on railroad right of way, per plans;
- Construct Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complaint sidewalks on both sides of the crossing;
- Install rubber crossing panel surface for pedestrian pathways, as shown on plans;
- Install a six foot channelization fence in the northwest quadrant of the crossing to prevent trespassing, as shown on plans;
- 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 advance warning signs, W3-1 “Stop Ahead” signs, W48 (CA) 2 tracks signs and RXR pavement markings, as shown in plans.

In addition, our records indicate that in 1998 the Commission authorized the San Diego Metropolitan Transit Development Board in SX-14 to deviate from the provisions of Section 7.8 of GO 75-C (now Section the 9.5 of GO 75-D) by modifying the sounding of the bells on the grade crossing warning devices equipped with gates. The warning bells sound only during the initial warning device activation and descent states until the gates are within ten degrees of the horizontal down position. SANDAG requests that the deviation remain, RCES staff has no objection to the continuation of the authorized deviation in SX-14.

The Commission’s Rail Crossings Engineering Section (RCES) investigated the request filed by the 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 letter dated July 20, 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: 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)