

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

320 W. 4th Street, Suite 500
Los Angeles, CA 90013



December 18, 2012

Kevin J. McAlister
Public Works Director
County of Kings
1400 W. Lacey Boulevard, Building 6
Hanford, CA 93230

File No. G.12-11-014

Re: General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Alter the Excelsior Avenue Highway–Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing No. 002-973.20 and DOT No. 028432F, in the County of Kings.

Dear Mr. McAlister:

This refers to your letter dated November 28, 2012, received by us via email on the same date, requesting authorization, pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) General Order (GO) 88-B, to alter the Excelsior Avenue highway-rail crossing (crossing) of the BNSF Railway Company (BNSF) tracks in the County of Kings (County). The crossing is identified as CPUC Crossing No. 002-973.20 and DOT No.028432F.

Excelsior Avenue is a rural major collector roadway at the crossing and throughout the County. At the crossing, there are two lanes, one for eastbound traffic, the other for westbound. There are no medians or sidewalks at the crossing. The crossing has two tracks, one main and one siding, aligned in a due north-south direction. Currently there are 25 freight and 12 Amtrak passenger trains that frequent this crossing per day. The crossing has two Commission Standard 9 (flashing light signal assembly with automatic gate arm) warning devices installed on the approaches. This project is being done in conjunction with the Section 130 Program.

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

- replacing the two Commission Standard 9 warning devices with two Commission Standard 9-A (flashing light signal assembly with automatic gate arm and additional flashing light signals over the roadway on a cantilevered arm) warning devices;
- installing an interconnected, active advance warning system, consisting of two flashing yellow beacons located at the W10-1 sign, placed 1000 feet from the centerline of the nearest track on both approaches per plan. The active advance warning system shall have a fail-safe battery back-up.

The Commission's Rail Crossings Engineering Section (RCES) staff has investigated the request by the County, and finds it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As the County and BNSF (Parties) 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.08, Temporary Traffic Control Zones, of the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CAMUTCD), 2012 Edition, published by the California Department of Transportation.

All Parties shall comply with all applicable rules, including other Commission General Orders, and the CAMUTCD.

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. A written request for a time extension must include concurrence letters by interested 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, the County shall notify RCES that the authorized work is completed by submitting a completed Commission Standard Form G *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/PUC/safety/Rail/Crossings/formg.htm>. This report may be submitted electronically to rces@cpuc.ca.gov as outlined on the web page.

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

If you have any questions, please contact Marvin Kennix at (916) 928-3809 or email at mlk@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



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

Cc: John Stilley, Manager of Industry & Public Projects, BNSF
Bree Arnett, CPUC