

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

320 W. 4TH STREET, SUITE 500
LOS ANGELES, CA 90013



March 20, 2013

File Number: G.13-03-003
Magnolia Avenue
Unincorporated Area of Riverside County

Khalid Nasim
Engineering Project Manager
County of Riverside
3525 14th Street
Riverside, CA 92501

Re: General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Modify the Four Combined Magnolia Avenue Highway-Rail Crossings and Pedestrian Crossings in Unincorporated Area of Riverside County.

Dear Mr. Nasim:

This refers to your letter dated February 26, 2013, received by us on March 6, 2013, requesting authorization, pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) General Order (GO) 88-B, to grade-separate the four Magnolia Avenue at-grade crossings on the BNSF Railway Company (BNSF) mainline 2B – San Bernardino to Fullerton tracks in unincorporated area of Riverside County (County).

The four at-grade pedestrian (bike lane) and highway-rail crossings are:

1. Magnolia Avenue Bike Lane – CPUC Crossing No. 002B-20.20-D and DOT No. 027472A
2. Magnolia Avenue Eastbound – CPUC Crossing No. 002B-20.30 and DOT No. 026517B
3. Magnolia Avenue Westbound – CPUC Crossing No. 002B-20.35 and DOT No. 026518H
4. Magnolia Avenue Bike Lane – CPUC Crossing No. 002B-20.40-D and DOT No. 027471T

The Magnolia Avenue double track at-grade crossing is a divided roadway with four lanes, two lanes in each direction and two bike lanes located on the northwest and southeast quadrants of the crossing. The four crossings are equipped with a combined total of two curb mounted Commission Standard 9-A (flashing light signal assembly with automatic gate arm and additional flashing light signals over the roadway on a cantilevered arm), two median mounted Commission Standard 9 (flashing light signal assembly with automatic gate arm) and two curb mounted Commission Standard 8 (flashing light signal assembly) warning devices with advance warning signage and pavement markings.

In addition to BNSF freight trains, the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) and the National Passenger Railroad Corporation (Amtrak) operate passenger trains over this line.

County proposes to construct a four lane overhead roadway bridge structure crossing the BNSF railroad tracks. During construction, the County proposes the following on Magnolia Avenue:

- Before start of the grade separation construction project, install an eastbound queue cutter traffic signal on the southeast quadrant of the at-grade crossing for eastbound Magnolia Avenue vehicular traffic to prevent queuing over the tracks;
- Re-align and widen to the south the eastbound Magnolia Avenue approach during Stage 1 while constructing the new roadway bridge structure on Magnolia Avenue which will follow the existing median alignment;
- Restrict eastbound Magnolia Avenue to a single 11-foot traffic lane and westbound Magnolia Avenue to a single 12-foot traffic lane during Stage 2 while utilizing the existing warning devices;
- Detour the vehicular traffic on Magnolia Avenue to the eastbound at-grade crossing with roadway widening to accommodate two 11-foot traffic lanes for both directions during Stage 3;
- Install an additional temporary Commission Standard 9 warning device for westbound Magnolia Avenue vehicular traffic during Stage 3;
- Close all pedestrian/bike access on the existing bike lane crossings during Stage 4; and
- Install California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) compliant signage and pavement markings, including W10-1, W48 and W10-12 advance warning signs and R8-8 "DO NOT STOP ON TRACKS" regulatory signage as shown in plans during construction.

As part of the project, the County is requesting a temporary deviation from the vertical clearance requirements of GO 26-D, for an impaired clearance of 21 feet 6 inches above the top rail during construction. GO 26-D, Section 2.1, requires a minimum vertical clearance of 22 feet 6 inches. Its permanent vertical clearance will be 28.7 feet. After the completion of the overhead roadway bridge structure, the existing at-grade and bike lane at-grade crossings will be eliminated and all warning devices, signage and queue cutter traffic signal will be removed.

The new completed grade separated crossing will be identified as CPUC Crossing Number 002B-20.30-A and DOT Number 026517B.

The Commission's Rail Crossings Engineering Section (RCES) investigated the request by the County, and finds it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As County and BNSF 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 and summarized above are authorized.

Temporary traffic controls shall be provided in compliance with the CA MUTCD, published by the California Department of Transportation. All parties shall comply with all applicable rules, including Commission General Orders and CAMUTCD.

This project is statutorily exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended. [California Public Resources Code 21080.13]

This authorization shall expire if the above conditions are not complied with and 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, County shall notify RCES that the authorized work is completed, by submitting a completed Commission Standard Form G title *Report of Changes at Highway Grade Crossings and Separation*. 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>. 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 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 Bill Lay at 213-576-1399 or bll@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



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

C: Melvin Thomas, Public Project Manager, BNSF
Naresh Patel, Public Projects Engineer, SCRRA
Harry Steelman, Division Engineer, Amtrak