

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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



January 13, 2014

Jason Sanchez
Manger of Public Projects
BNSF Railway Company
740 East Carnegie Drive
San Bernardino, CA 92408

XREQ2013120001

Re: General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Alter the Burchell Avenue Highway–Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing No. 002-1044.50 and DOT No. 028643C, in the County of Merced.

Dear Mr. Sanchez:

This refers to your letter received by us via email on December 5, 2013, requesting authorization, pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) General Order (GO) 88-B, to alter the Burchell Avenue highway-rail crossing (crossing) of the BNSF Railway Company (BNSF) track in an unincorporated area of the County of Merced (County). The crossing is identified as CPUC Crossing No. 002-1044.50 and DOT No.028643C.

At the crossing, Burchell Avenue is a local rural north-south roadway with two lanes where the annual average daily traffic is 200 vehicles. There are no raised medians or sidewalks at the crossing. There is one track aligned in a northwest-southeast direction. There are 25 freight and 12 Amtrak trains that frequent this crossing per day. There is a Commission Standard 9 (flashing light signal assembly with automatic gate arm) warning device in the northwest quadrant, and a Commission Standard 8 (flashing light signal assembly) warning device and a stub gate, together functioning as a Commission Standard 9 warning device, in the southeast quadrant. The proposed alterations to the crossing are part of BNSF's Merced Rail Corridor double-track construction project.

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

- installing another mainline track;
- installing concrete panels on the new mainline track;
- relocating the Commission Standard 9 warning device in the northwest quadrant;
- replacing the existing Commission Standard 8 warning device and stub gate in the southeast quadrant with a new Commission Standard 9 warning device;
- installing an asphalt berm in front of each warning device;
- installing signage, including a W10-2 sign with a W48(CA) "2 TRACKS" sign below it on both parallel Santa Fe Avenue approaches, a W10-1 sign with a W48(CA) sign below it on the southbound Burchell Avenue approach, and a W10-5 sign with a W10-5P "LOW GROUND CLEARANCE" plaque below it on both Burchell Avenue approaches;
- removing the existing W10-1 sign on the northbound Burchell Avenue approach;
- installing new pavement, pavement markings (RXR), and striping.

The Commission's Rail Crossings Engineering Section (RCES) staff has investigated the request by BNSF, and finds it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As BNSF and the County (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].

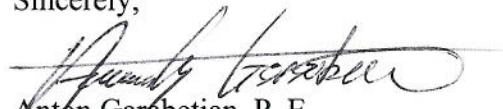
This authorization shall expire if the above conditions are not complied with or if the work is not completed within three years of the date of this letter. Upon written request to this office, the time to complete the project may be extended. A written request for a time extension must include concurrence 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, BNSF 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
Safety and Enforcement Division

Cc: Dana S. Hertfelder, Director of Public Works, County of Merced