

## PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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



August 20, 2014

File Number: XREQ 2014080003  
Pacific Avenue  
Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz County

Christophe Schneider  
Assistant Director/City Engineer  
City of Santa Cruz  
809 Center Street, Rm 201  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

[cschneider@cityofsantacruz.com](mailto:cschneider@cityofsantacruz.com)

**SENT VIA EMAIL**

**Re: General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Alter the Pacific Avenue At-Grade Highway–Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing No. 017B-19.95, SCR-1018 and DOT No. 768230A in The City of Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz County.**

Dear Mr. Schneider:

This refers to your letter, dated June 10, 2014, received by us on June 18, 2014, requesting authorization, pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) General Order (GO) 88-B, to modify the Pacific Avenue at-grade highway-rail crossing (crossing) of the Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) track in the City of Santa Cruz (City), Santa Cruz County. The crossing is identified as CPUC Crossing No. 017B-19.95, SCR-1018 and DOT No. 768230A.

The crossing consists of one industrial lead track. The crossing has two curb mounted Commission Standard 8-A (flashing light signal assemblies with additional flashing light signals over the roadway on cantilevered arms) warning devices. SCCRTC owns the track and has contracted the Santa Cruz & Monterey Bay Railway (SCX) to operate over and maintain the track. SCX operates approximately 3 freight trains per week at a maximum speed limit of 5 MPH over the crossing. During the summer, the Santa Cruz Big Trees and Pacific Railway (SCBG) operates 4 passenger trains per day at a maximum speed limit of 5 mph over the crossing. The crossing currently has two sidewalks on each approach and is adjacent to the stop controlled intersection of Pacific Avenue and Beach Street. There is a two-way designated bike path that runs along eastbound Beach Street and south of the new Beach Street/Pacific Avenue roundabout. The SCCRTC tracks convert to street running on Beach Street, immediately east of the Pacific Avenue/Beach Street intersection. The installation of the roundabout at the Pacific Avenue/Beach Street intersection include the proposed crossing alterations that will “allow motorists to more efficiently clear the tracks as a train approaches” and “the median and splitter islands will prevent motorists from driving around the gates.”

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

- Reconfiguring the Pacific Avenue and Beach Street intersection to a two lane roundabout;
- Reconfiguring the southbound travel lanes through the crossing, reducing the number of lanes from three to two (one dedicated right turn lane and one through lane);
- Reconfiguring the northbound travel lanes through the crossing to two through lanes;
- Replacing the curb mounted Commission Standard 8-A and installing a curb mounted Commission Standard 9 (flashing light signal assembly with automatic gate) in the northwest quadrant of the crossing for the southbound vehicular approach;
- Installing a median mounted Commission Standard 9 on the southbound vehicular approach to the crossing;
- Replacing the curb mounted Commission Standard 8-A with a Commission Standard 9 in the southeast quadrant of the crossing for the northbound vehicular approach;
- Installing a median mounted Commission Standard 9 on the roundabout for the northbound vehicular approach;
- Installing a Commission Standard 8 (flashing light signal assembly) in the southwest quadrant of the crossing for the pedestrian sidewalk approach;
- Installing a Commission Standard 8 with an additional set of flashers to address pedestrians on the sidewalk approach in the northeast quadrant of the crossing;
- Installing a Commission Standard 8 in the southeast quadrant of the crossing to address pedestrian sidewalk approach;
- Widening the crossing by adding additional concrete panel surface for the track on the east side of the crossing;
- Installing a new striped pedestrian crosswalk on the south side of the crossing on the east, west and south leg of the roundabout and approximately 170 feet north of the crossing;
- Installing a 10-foot in width and 90-foot in length raised concrete median on the southbound vehicular approach to the crossing;
- Installing a raised concrete median between the number 1 and number 2 southbound vehicle travel lanes on the north side of the roundabout approach on each side of the crossing;
- Installing a raised concrete pork-chop median south of the crossing to direct southbound motorists into the roundabout;
- Installing painted medians within the crossing to guide vehicular traffic;
- Installing medians with pedestrian crosswalk cut-outs on the east and northbound approach to the roundabout;
- Maintaining the two-way bike path on eastbound Beach Street and installing a bike path cut-out on the northbound vehicular approach median on the roundabout;
- Installing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant detectable warning tactile strips on all sidewalk approaches;
- Installing curb ramps and ADA compliant sidewalk landings with detectable warning tactile strips on all crosswalk approaches at the Pacific Avenue and Beach Street roundabout;
- Relocating the signal box from the northwest quadrant to the southwest quadrant of the crossing;
- Installing bollards outlining the parking perimeter in the southwest quadrant of the crossing to prevent motorists from driving onto the track and into the nearby parking

- lot;
- Removing the street parking in the southeast quadrant of the crossing; and
- Applying California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) compliant signage and pavement markings, including W10-1, and W48(CA) advance warning signs, RXR and railroad limit pavement markings as shown on plans

The Commission's Rail Crossings Safety Section (RCSS) investigated the request by the City and finds it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As the City, SCX, and SCCRTC 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.

SCX must also ensure that Emergency Notification Signs are installed to comply with CFR 234.309.

Temporary traffic controls shall be provided in compliance with Section 8A.08, Temporary Traffic Control Zones, of the CA MUTCD, 2012 Edition, 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 RCSS, 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, RCSS may re-evaluate the crossing prior to granting an extension.

Within 30 days after completion of this project, the City and/or SCX shall notify RCSS 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 Commission 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](mailto:rces@cpuc.ca.gov) as outlined on the web page.

At the conclusion of the project, SCX must 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).

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If you have any questions, please contact Felix Ko at (415) 703-3722 or [felix.ko@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:felix.ko@cpuc.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anton Garabetian", written over a horizontal line.

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

cc: **(SENT VIA EMAIL)**

Todd Cecil, Santa Cruz and Monterey Bay Railway, [cecilt@iowapacific.com](mailto:cecilt@iowapacific.com)  
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[gdondero@scrtc.org](mailto:gdondero@scrtc.org)