

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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



April 20, 2016

File Number: XREQ 2016040001
State Route 98 (Birch Street)
City of Calexico, Imperial County

Gwendolyn Denny
District Railroad Coordinator
California Department of Transportation
4050 Taylor Street, Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92114

SENT VIA EMAIL

Re: General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Modify the State Route 98 (Birch Street) At-Grade Highway-Rail Crossing, Identified as CPUC Crossing No. 001BN-707.80 and DOT No. 760900M, in City of Calexico, San Diego County.

Dear Ms. Denny:

This refers to your letter, dated December 28, 2015, and received by us on March 24, 2016, requesting authorization pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) General Order (GO) 88-B, to modify the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) State Route 98 (SR 98/Birch Street) at-grade highway-rail crossing (crossing) of the Union Pacific Railroad Company (UPRR) Calexico Subdivision tracks, in the City of Calexico (City), Imperial County. The crossing is identified as CPUC Crossing No. 001BN-707.80 and DOT No. 760900M.

The crossing includes three lanes (two through lanes and one left-turn only lane) and is equipped with two Commission Standard 9 (flashing light signal assembly with automatic gate arm) warning devices. UPRR operates approximately three freight trains through the crossing each day with a typical speed of 10 miles per hour (MPH). The request states an average daily traffic count of 18,377 vehicles per day. The roadway speed limit is 40 MPH.

Caltrans plans to widen the roadway to provide three additional traffic lanes (two additional through lanes, and one additional left-turn only lane) along SR 98 at the crossing, resulting in a total of six lanes (four through lanes and two left-turn only lanes). A traffic signal will be installed at the intersection of SR 98 and Cesar Chavez Boulevard, which is located just west of the crossing. The existing crossing, all roadway approaches and the nearby intersection will be reconstructed to accommodate the extensive roadway widening and traffic signal installation work.

Caltrans proposes the following alterations, as discussed in greater detail and shown in plans submitted with Caltrans request:

- Widen the roadway to construct a total of six lanes at the crossing;
- Install a 10-foot wide raised median along both approaches to the crossing;

- Install one 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) and one median-mounted Commission Standard 9 warning devices on the northeast quadrant of the crossing;
- Install two Commission Standard 9 warning devices, including one mounted on the curb and one mounted on the median on the southwest quadrant of the crossing;
- Install on each of the two curb-mounted warning devices an additional pair of 12-inch light emitting diode (LED) flashing light signals facing pedestrians that are approaching along the sidewalk on the opposite side of the crossing;
- Install a new traffic signal system at the intersection of SR 98 and Cesar Chavez Boulevard to be interconnected with the rail crossing warning devices;
- Install railroad preemption with 16 seconds of advance preemption time, 28 seconds of track clearance green time, followed by limited service operation which prohibits movements toward the track during railroad preemption;
- Install two pedestrian crosswalks, including one across Cesar Chavez Boulevard on the south leg of the intersection and one across SR 98 on the west leg of the intersection;
- Install California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) compliant signs including:
 - two train-activated blank-out symbolic “NO RIGHT TURN” (R3-1) signs facing northbound Cesar Chavez Boulevard vehicular traffic;
 - two “STOP HERE ON RED,” (R10-6) signs and two “DO NOT STOP ON TRACKS,” (R8-8) signs along the westbound vehicular approach to the crossing;
- Install four “KEEP CLEAR” pavement markings for motorists, including one in each westbound lane that crosses the track;
- Install an overhead street light (illumination) in each of the four quadrants of the crossing;
- Install Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant sidewalk across the crossing on both sides of the roadway;
- Install ADA compliant detectable warning tactile strips on each of the four sidewalk approaches to the crossing; and
- Install concrete crossing surfacing panels along the track, extending through the roadway and sidewalks.

The Commission’s Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch (RCEB) investigated the request by Caltrans and finds it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As Caltrans, UPRR and 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 and attachments dated December 28, 2015, and summarized above are authorized.

Temporary traffic controls shall be provided in compliance with the current version of the CA MUTCD, published by the Caltrans. All parties shall comply with all applicable rules, including Commission GOs, ADA requirements and the CA MUTCD.

UPRR must ensure that Emergency Notification Systems signs are installed to comply with CFR 234.309.

This project is categorically exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended [California Public Resources Code §21084].

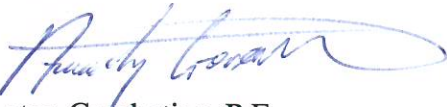
This authorization shall expire if the above conditions are not complied with or if the work is not completed within three (3) years of the date of this letter. Upon written request to RCEB, the time to complete the project may be extended. Any written request for a time extension must include concurrence letters by involved parties in support of the time extension. If an extension is requested, RCEB may re-evaluate the crossing prior to granting an extension.

Within 30 days after completion of this project, Caltrans shall notify RCEB that the authorized work is completed, by submitting a completed Commission Standard Form G. Form G requirements and forms can be obtained at the Commission web site at <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/crossings>. This report may be submitted electronically to rceb@cpuc.ca.gov.

At the conclusion of the project, UPRR should electronically submit an updated Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) inventory form (Form F6180.71) to the FRA, reflecting the changes. 49 CFR 234 Section 234.409 requires the railroads to submit periodic crossing inventory updates a minimum of once every three years. Commission requests a concurrent copy of the updated inventory form be submitted to rceb@cpuc.ca.gov.

If you have any questions, please contact Kevin Schumacher at kevin.schumacher@cpuc.ca.gov or (415) 310-9807.

Sincerely,



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

cc: **(SENT VIA E-MAIL)**
Nick Fenley, City
Chris Keckeisen, UPRR
Alexander Popovici, UPRR

