

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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



January 10, 2017

File Number XREQ 2016120008
Almar Avenue
Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz County

Christopher Schneiter
Assistant Director/City Engineer
City of Santa Cruz
809 Center Street
Santa Cruz, CA 94060

SENT VIA E-MAIL

Re: General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Alter the Almar Avenue At-Grade Highway-Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing No. 017B-21.40 and DOT No. 768159T, in the City of Santa Cruz, County of Santa Cruz.

Dear Mr. Schneiter:

This refers to your letter dated December 6, 2016 and received by us on December 13, 2016, requesting authorization, pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) General Order (GO) 88-B, to alter the Almar Avenue at-grade highway-rail crossing (crossing) of the Santa Cruz and Monterey Bay Railway (SCX) tracks in the City of Santa Cruz (City), County of Santa Cruz. The crossing is identified as CPUC Crossing No. 017B-21.40 and DOT No. 768159T. The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) owns the track and right of way and leases the track to SCX who has operational and maintenance responsibilities.

The single track crossing is equipped with 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) warning device. Maximum train speed is 10 mph at the crossing. There is currently no train traffic operating over the crossing. The average daily traffic on Almar Avenue is 2,987 vehicles.

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

- Installing a pedestrian pathway south of the tracks;
- Installing fencing between the pedestrian pathway and the tracks for the entire length of the pathway;
- Installing a crosswalk with green bicycle pavement markings south of the crossing;
- Installing curb ramps with detectable warning for the crosswalk;
- Installing a "STOP" control for the pedestrian path at Almar Avenue;
- Installing detectable warning strips in the northwest and southwest quadrants;
- Installing a pedestrian barricade in the northeast quadrant;

- Installing a pedestrian barricade in the southeast quadrant of the Almar Avenue and Rankin Street intersection;
- Installing red curb parking restrictions in all quadrants; and
- Applying California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) compliant signage and pavement markings, including “KEEP CLEAR” pavement markings and R8-8 “DO NOT STOP ON TRACKS” signs.

The Commission’s Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch (RCEB) staff investigated the City’s request, and finds it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As the City, SCCRTC, and SCX 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, attachments, and summarized above. The City must complete all the proposed alterations mentioned above for RCEB to consider this GO 88-B application closed.

SCX must ensure that Emergency Notification Signs are installed to comply with Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 234.309.

Temporary traffic controls shall be provided in compliance with Section 8A.08, Temporary Traffic Control Zones, of the CA MUTCD, 2014 Edition, published by the California Department of Transportation.

All parties shall comply with all applicable rules, including Commission General Orders and 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 this office, 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, the RCEB may reevaluate the crossing prior to granting an extension.

Within 30 days after completion of this project, SCX 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 Form G page at <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/crossings>. This report may be submitted electronically to rceb@cpuc.ca.gov.

At the conclusion of the project, SCX should electronically submit an updated Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) inventory form (Form F6180.71) to the FRA, reflecting the changes. Title 49 CFR 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.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anton Garabetian", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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

(SENT VIA E-MAIL)

C: George Dondero, Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
Stephen Hill, Santa Cruz & Monterey Bay Railway

