

## PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

320 W. 4<sup>TH</sup> STREET, SUITE 500  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90013



October 9, 2017

File Number: XREQ 2017090006  
Santa Ana Freeway (I-5) Overpass  
Cities of Laguna Hills and Mission Viejo, Orange County

Erika Irizarry  
Associate Right of Way Agent  
California Department of Transportation  
1750 East Four Street, Suite 100  
Santa Ana, CA 92705

**SENT VIA EMAIL**

**Re: General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Modify the Grade-Separated Highway-Rail Crossing at Santa Ana Freeway (I-5) Overpass, Identified as CPUC Crossing No. 101OR-190.50-A and DOT No. 026778B, in the Cities of Laguna Hills and Mission Viejo, County of Orange.**

Dear Ms. Irizarry:

This refers to your letter, dated and received by us on September 7, 2016, requesting authorization pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) General Order (GO) 88-B, to modify the Santa Ana Freeway (I-5) grade-separated highway-rail crossing (crossing) over the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA/Metrolink) Orange Line main tracks, in the Cities of Laguna Hills and Mission Viejo, Orange County. The crossing is identified as CPUC Crossing No. 101OR-190.50-A and DOT No. 026778B.

The overpass crossing is a twelve-lane bridge comprised of a ten-lane freeway structure, a single lane on-ramp and a single lane off-ramp that cross over two Metrolink tracks. The National Passenger Railroad Corporation (Amtrak) and Metrolink operate approximately 67 passenger trains daily with a maximum speed of 90 MPH, and BNSF Railway Company operates approximately eight freight trains daily with a maximum speed of 55 MPH. The railroad right-of-way is owned by the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA).

To increase freeway capacity and relieve traffic congestion, California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 12 plans the following alterations at the I-5 Freeway bridge structure:

- Widen the northbound portion of bridge structure from 68 to 103 feet; and
- Realign and re-construct the El Toro Overhead off-ramp structure with pier protection to approximately 44 feet east of the existing location.

The proposed permanent vertical clearances above the top of rail are 27 feet 4 inches for the freeway and 25 feet 11 inches for the off-ramp. The temporary vertical clearance for the El Toro off-ramp during construction is 22 feet 6 inches. The proposed permanent horizontal clearance is 12 feet from the centerline of track to the pier protection. No temporary horizontal clearance is requested during construction. The proposed temporary and permanent clearances comply with Commission GO 26-D minimum clearance requirements.

The Commission's Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch (RCEB) investigated the request by Caltrans and finds it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As Caltrans, OCTA and SCRRA 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 dated September 7, 2017, and summarized above, are authorized. All parties shall comply with all applicable rules, including Commission General Orders and the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD), published by Caltrans.

Temporary traffic controls shall be provided in compliance with the current version of the CA MUTCD.

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 or if the work is not completed within three 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 and/or SCRRA shall notify RCEB that the authorized work is completed, by submitting a completed Commission Standard Form G titled *Report of Changes at Highway Grade Crossings and Separation*. 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](mailto:rceb@cpuc.ca.gov) as outlined on the web page.

At the conclusion of the project, SCRRA should electronically submit an updated Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) inventory form (Form F6180.71) to the FRA, reflecting the changes. Commission requests a concurrent copy of the updated inventory form be submitted to [rceb@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:rceb@cpuc.ca.gov).

If you have any questions, please contact Chi Cheung To at (213) 576-5766 or at [cct@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:cct@cpuc.ca.gov).

Sincerely,



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

cc: **(SENT VIA E-MAIL)**  
Andrew Althorp, SCRRA  
Jim Beil, OCTA  
Ricky Rodriguez, Caltrans