

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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



May 1, 2020

File Number: XREQ 2020040004
Ohlone Parkway
Watsonville, Santa Cruz County

Murray A. Fontes
Principal Engineer
City of Watsonville
250 Main Street
Watsonville, CA 95076

SENT VIA E-MAIL

Re: General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Alter the Ohlone Parkway At-Grade Highway-Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing No. 017B-2.25, and DOT No. 752389W, in the City of Watsonville, Santa Cruz County.

Dear Mr. Fontes:

This refers to your letter dated and received by us on April 10, 2020, requesting authorization, pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) General Order (GO) 88-B, to alter the Ohlone Parkway at-grade highway-rail crossing (crossing) of the St. Paul & Pacific Railroad (SPP) tracks in the City of Watsonville (City), County of Santa Cruz. The crossing is identified as CPUC Crossing No. 017B-2.25 and DOT No. 752389W.

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) owns the tracks and has contracted SPP to operate over and maintain them.

The double-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 devices. Four freight trains operate per week over the crossing at a maximum speed of 10 miles per hour. The average daily traffic at the crossing is 3,923 vehicles.

This project is part of the plan to construct a bike trail in the City of Watsonville as a portion of a 50-mile bicycle and pedestrian pathway along the coast of Santa Cruz County, from the San Mateo County line in the north to the Monterey County line at the Pajaro River. The trail provides pedestrians and cyclists a commute alternative and an outlet for recreation and exercise. It is also as a part of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission's (SCCRTC) Network Master Plan for Santa Cruz County.

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

- Installing Class I bike trail on the north side of the crossing.
- Installing a crosswalk and green bike lane across Ohlone Parkway.
- Installing R1-1 "STOP" signs to stop trail users prior to crossing Ohlone Parkway.
- Installing a concrete sidewalk through the west side of the crossing.

- Installing edge lines to delineate the vehicle travel path.
- Installing fencing along the trail.
- Installing 4-inch-wide solid line warning stripes with glass beads on the trail to slow bikes.
- Installing Americans with Disabilities Act compliant detectable warning strips on the sidewalk approaches to the crossing as well as for the trail crossing at Ohlone Parkway.
- Widening the crossing by installing additional concrete panels on the west side of the crossing.
- Installing curb and gutter in all four quadrants.
- Installing signage, striping, and “RXR” pavement markings compliant with the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CAMUTCD).

The Commission's Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch (RCEB) staff has investigated the City's request and finds it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As the City and SPP 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.

SPP must also ensure that Emergency Notification System signs are installed to comply with 49 CFR 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.

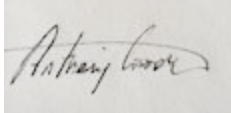
Within 30 days after completion of this project, the City shall notify RCEB that the authorized work is completed, by submitting a completed Commission Standard Form G. Form G requirements and forms can be obtained at the Commission web site at <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/Crossings>. This report may be submitted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

At the conclusion of the project, SPP 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.

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If you have any questions, please contact Ade Sogbesan at (415) 703-1869 or es3@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature appears to read "Anton Garabetian".

Anton Garabetian, P. E.
Acting Program Manager
Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch
Rail Safety Division

cc:

Guy Preston, SCCRTC
Lon VanGemert, SPP
Alfred Yalda, Zephyr Rail