

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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



August 20, 2020

File Number: XREQ 2020080001
Taussig Avenue
Unincorporated Kern County

Bruce Armistead
Director of Operations and Maintenance
California High-Speed Rail Authority
770L Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

SENT VIA EMAIL

Re: General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Alter the Taussig Avenue Highway-Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing Number 002-917.00 and DOT Number 028308A in Unincorporated Kern County

Dear Mr. Armistead:

This refers to your letter, received by us on August 5, 2020, requesting authorization, pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (Commission/CPUC) General Order (GO) 88-B, to modify the Taussig Avenue at-grade highway-rail crossing (crossing) of BNSF Railway (BNSF) track, in unincorporated Kern County (County). The crossing is identified as CPUC Crossing No. 002-917.00 and DOT No. 028308A.

The crossing consists of one track and an east-west roadway, with one through lane in each direction that makes a T-intersection with State Route 43 east of the crossing. The crossing is equipped with two Commission Standard 9 (Flashing Light Signal Assembly with Automatic Gate Arm) warning devices. BNSF operates 40 freight trains daily over the crossing with a maximum speed of 70 miles per hour. Amtrak operates 14 passenger trains daily over the crossing with a maximum speed of 79 miles per hour. The average daily traffic at Taussig Avenue is approximately 889 vehicles.

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) proposes to construct two sets of High-Speed Rail (HSR) tracks at Taussig Avenue, west of the BNSF crossing, closing Taussig Avenue at the tracks. The BNSF crossing will remain open to provide access for the Authority, BNSF, utility owners, and property owners to their facilities. The Authority proposes, along with this construction, safety improvements as indicated in the request letter and/or shown in the attachments to include:

- Construction of a cul-de-sac at Taussig Avenue end of roadway on the west side of the proposed HSR tracks.
- Construction of a hammerhead-type end of roadway between the proposed HSR tracks and the BNSF crossing.
- Construction of an intrusion protection fence along the proposed HSR tracks.
- Installation of Type 3 barricade at the dead end of Taussig Avenue between the HSR right-of-way and BNSF crossing.

- Application of California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) standard signage and pavement markings.

As stated in the request letter, the Authority will be responsible for maintaining the hammerhead roadway, including all signage, striping, and pavement, on behalf of County.

The Commission's Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch (RCEB) investigated the request by the Authority and finds that it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As the Authority, BNSF, County, and California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) 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 received on August 5, 2020, and summarized above, are authorized.

All parties shall comply with all applicable rules, including Commission GOs and the current version of CAMUTCD, published by Caltrans. The Authority must complete all the proposed alterations mentioned above for RCEB to consider this GO 88-B application closed.

Temporary traffic controls shall be provided in compliance with the current version of the CA MUTCD. Refer to CA MUTCD Section 6G.18 and Figure 6H-46 regarding "Work in the Vicinity of a Grade Crossing."

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 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 reevaluate the crossing prior to granting an extension.

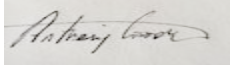
Within 30 days after completion of this project, the Authority shall notify RCEB that the authorized work is completed, by submitting a completed Commission Standard Form G titled *Report of Changes at Highway Grade Crossings and Separation*. Form G requirements and forms can be obtained at the CPUC web site at <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/crossings>. This report may be submitted electronically to rceb@cpuc.ca.gov as outlined on the web page.

At the conclusion of the project, BNSF Railway 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.

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XREQ 2020080001
August 20, 2020
Page 3 of 3

If you have any questions, please contact Oliver Garcia at (213) 369-4674, or og1@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



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

C: **(SENT VIA EMAIL)**
Taylor Smith, BNSF Railway
Craig M. Pope, County of Kern
Garth Fernandez, Caltrans