

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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



March 4, 2021

File Number: XREQ 2021020003
South Chester Avenue
Unincorporated Kern County

Michael Dillenbeck
Public Works Manager
Kern County Public Works
2700 M Street, Suite 400
Bakersfield, CA 93301

SENT VIA EMAIL

Re: General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Alter the South Chester Avenue At-Grade Highway-Rail Crossing, CPUC Crossing Number 103BT-317.50 and DOT Number 750991T in Unincorporated Kern County

Dear Mr. Dillenbeck:

This refers to your letter, received by us on February 4, 2021, requesting authorization, pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (Commission/CPUC) General Order (GO) 88-B, to modify the South Chester Avenue highway-rail at-grade crossing (crossing) of San Joaquin Valley Railroad (SJVR) Buttonwillow Subdivision track, in unincorporated Kern County (County). The crossing is identified as CPUC Crossing No. 103BT-317.50 and DOT Crossing No. 750991T.

The crossing consists of one track and a north-south roadway with two through lanes and one bicycle lane in each direction. The crossing is equipped with two curb-mounted and two median-mounted Commission Standard 9 (Flashing Light Signal Assembly with Automatic Gate Arm) warning devices. SJVR operates two freight trains daily over the crossing with a maximum speed of 25 miles per hour. Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) owns the railroad right-of-way (ROW). The average daily traffic at South Chester Avenue is approximately 10,405 vehicles. The roadway segment north of tracks is under County jurisdiction, and to the south is under City of Bakersfield (City) jurisdiction. The cross-street nearest this location is a T-intersection of Sandra Drive, approximately 260 feet to the south.

The County proposes the following modifications to the crossing, as indicated in the request letter and/or shown in the attachments:

- Install Americans with Disabilities Act compliant sidewalks on the east and west sides of the roadway. Sidewalks will include detectable warning strips and handrail channelization to keep pedestrians on sidewalks. Sidewalks will cross tracks at a 90-degree angle.
- Paint two W10-1 advance warning signs, "RXR" pavement marking and stop bars for each approach.
- Install fencing and gates to limit dumping and illegal vehicle access onto the railroad ROW.
- Apply California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) standard signage and pavement markings.

The Commission's Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch (RCEB) investigated the request by the County and finds that it adequately addresses compliance and safety. As the County, City, SJVR and UPRR 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 February 4, 2021, and summarized above, are authorized.

All parties shall comply with all applicable rules, including Commission GOs and the current version of CAMUTCD, published by California Department of Transportation. The County 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."

SJVR must ensure that Emergency Notification Systems signs are installed on new warning devices 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 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.

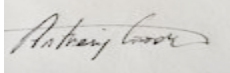
Within 30 days after completion of this project, the County shall notify RCEB that the authorized work is completed, by submitting a completed Commission Standard Form G titled *Report of Changes at Highway Grade Crossings and Separation*. Form G requirements and forms can be obtained at the CPUC web 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, SJVR 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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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
Rail Safety Division

C: **(SENT VIA EMAIL)**
Jerry Haar, SJVR
Kenneth Tom, UPRR
Nick Fidler, City of Bakersfield