

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102



August 21, 2023

File Number: XREQ 2023080002
B Street
City of Modesto, Stanislaus County

Mark Murphy
Traffic Engineer
City of Modesto
1010 10th Street
Modesto, CA 95354

Re: General Order 88-B Request for Authority to Alter the B Street Rail Crossing

Dear Mark Murphy:

This refers to your letter dated August 8, 2023, requesting authorization, pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (Commission/CPUC) General Order (GO) 88-B, to alter the B Street rail crossing (crossing) of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) track, in the City of Modesto (City), County of Stanislaus. The crossing is identified as CPUC Crossing Number 001B-113.60 and DOT Number 752868B.

The crossing is a northeast-southwest, four-lane roadway that consists of one track. The crossing is equipped with two curb-mounted Commission Standard 9 (Flashing Light Signal Assembly with Automatic Gate Arm) warning devices.

The Commission's Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch (RCEB) reviewed the request by the City, and other relevant information regarding the crossing, including the preemption of the intersection of B Street and 7th Street. RCEB records indicate that a previous authorization was granted in 2013 which increased the total preemption time to 68 seconds, including 37 seconds of advance preemption. UPRR reported that the circuitry had been installed as of October 28, 2014.

The current request would reduce the existing advance preemption time from 37 seconds to 24 seconds and split the advance preemption into separate circuits for advance vehicle preemption (4 seconds) and advance pedestrian preemption (20 seconds). This modification would reduce the time available to serve pedestrians in the crosswalks at the adjacent B Street and 7th Street intersection during a crossing activation and could result in pedestrians being unable to complete their movements safely. Reducing the pedestrian time would especially impact vulnerable users, such as the elderly and those in wheelchairs. In addition, vehicles may not be able to move off the tracks if pedestrians are still in the crosswalk.

RCEB supports other aspects of the proposed alterations but does not support the proposed reduction in preemption time. Therefore, the City's request is denied. The City may re-submit their request with the existing preemption time, or pursuant to Section 6 of GO 88-B, the City may apply to the Commission for authority to make the alterations by filing a formal application. Please note that RCEB would protest any application that proposes a reduction in the preemption time.

If you have any questions, please contact Pablo Vargas at (916) 532-8807 or pablo.vargas@cpuc.ca.gov.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matthew Bond". The signature is written in a cursive style with a blue ink color.

Matthew Bond, PE
Program and Project Supervisor
Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch
Rail Safety Division

cc: Kenneth Tom, Union Pacific Railroad
Sam Chrun, County of Stanislaus