

Mailed 09/12/00

Decision 00-09-016 September 07, 2000

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Application of the State of California,
Department of Transportation, for an order
authorizing the Department to: reconstruct the
Ortega Street Pedestrian Overcrossing, located in
the City of Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara County,
State of California

Application A.00-05-038
(Filed May 12, 2000)

OPINION

Summary

State of California, Department of Transportation (Caltrans) requests authority to reconstruct Ortega Street Pedestrian Overcrossing over Union Pacific Railroad Company's (UP) Coast Main Line tracks, formerly owned by the Southern Pacific Transportation Company, located in the City of Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara County.

Caltrans, in connection with the revision of an interchange with Route 101, proposes to reconstruct a crossing at separated grades that will be known as Ortega Pedestrian Overcrossing. The purpose of this project is to replace the existing overcrossing, which was damaged beyond repair by an overheight vehicle.

Discussion

The Overcrossing will cross over the UP's "E" Coast Mainline. It will be located at Ortega Street Station 2+61.21. The Overcrossing will be a nine-span bridge 1199'-11 3/4" long and provide a walkway width of 12'-0" between barriers. The structure will consist of a Cast-in-Place/Reinforced Concrete Box Girder Bridge.

The estimated Pedestrian Daily Traffic (PDT) on the Overcrossing at the time of completion is estimated to be 200. The estimated PDT in Year 2025 is anticipated to be 200.

Caltrans is the lead agency for this project under the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA), as amended, Public Resources (PR) Code Sections 21000, et seq. Caltrans has determined that this project is categorically exempt from CEQA under PR Code Section 21080.13. It can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment [CCR 15061 (b)(3)].

The Commission is a responsible agency for this project under CEQA and has reviewed and considered Caltrans' environmental documentation. The site of the project has been inspected by the Commission's Rail Safety and Carrier Division – Rail Crossings Engineering Section staff. Staff examined the need for and the safety of the proposed grade separations and related railroad construction and recommends that the application be approved.

The application was found to be in compliance under the Commission's filing requirements, including Rule 39 of the Rules of Practice and Procedure, which relates to the reconstruction and widening of public highway crossings and separations over a railroad. A site map of the grade crossing and separations is as shown on plans attached to the application and Appendix A.

In Resolution ALJ 176-3040, dated June 6, 2000, and published in the Commission Daily Calendar on June 15, 2000, the Commission preliminarily categorized this application as ratesetting, and preliminarily determined that hearings were not necessary. The Commission's Rail Safety and Carriers Division recommends that this application be granted. Given these developments, public hearing is not necessary, and it is not necessary to disturb the preliminary determinations made in Resolution ALJ 176-3040.

This is an uncontested matter, in which the decision grants the relief requested. Accordingly, pursuant to PU Code Section 311(g)(2), the otherwise applicable 30-day period for public review and comments is being waived.

Findings of Fact

1. Notice of the application and amendment were published in the Commission Daily Calendar on May 24, 2000. No protests have been received. A public hearing is not necessary.

2. Caltrans requests authority under Public Utilities Code Sections 1201-1205 to reconstruct Ortega Street Pedestrian Overcrossing over Union Pacific Railroad Company's Coast Main Line tracks, formerly owned by the Southern Pacific Transportation Company, located in the City of Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara County.

3. The reconstruction of the Ortega Street Overcrossing is required to provide safe pedestrian access along Ortega Street across SR 101 and the Union Pacific Railroad Company's tracks.

4. During construction, temporary impaired vertical clearance will be 21'-0" and impaired horizontal clearance will be 12'-0".

5. Public convenience, necessity and safety require reconstruction of the existing Ortega Street Pedestrian Overcrossing.

6. Caltrans is the lead agency for this project under CEQA, as amended.

7. The Commission is a responsible agency for this project and has reviewed and considered the lead agency's exemption determination.

8. It can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment.

Conclusions of Law

1. The application should be granted as set forth in the following order.
2. The activity is not covered by the requirements set forth in CEQA and, therefore, the Guidelines (14 Cal. Admin. Code - Div. 6) concerning the evaluation of projects and the preparation and review of environmental documents do not apply.

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. State of California, Department of Transportation (Caltrans) requests authority to reconstruct Ortega Street Pedestrian Overcrossing over Union Pacific Railroad Company's (UP) Coast Main Line tracks, formerly owned by the Southern Pacific Transportation Company, located in the City of Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara County, to be identified as Crossing E-370.0-AD.
2. Clearances shall be in accordance with General Order (GO) 26-D; except that during the period of construction, temporary falsework clearances of 21'-0" vertical and 12'-0" horizontal shall be authorized, and UP shall be authorized to operate with such reduced overhead clearances provided instructions are issued by the railroad and filed with the Commission forbidding employees to ride on tops of cars beneath the structures.
3. Caltrans shall notify the Commission and UP at least 15, but not more than 30, days in advance of the date when the temporary impaired clearances will be created.
4. Walkways shall conform to GO 118. Walkways adjacent to any trackage subject to rail operations shall be maintained free of obstructions and shall be

promptly restored to their original condition in the event of damage during construction.

5. Construction and maintenance costs shall be borne in accordance with an agreement entered into between parties. A copy of the agreement shall be filed by Caltrans with the Commission's Rail Safety and Carriers Division prior to commencing construction.

6. Within 30 days after completion of the work under this order, Caltrans shall notify the Commission in writing that the authorized work was completed.

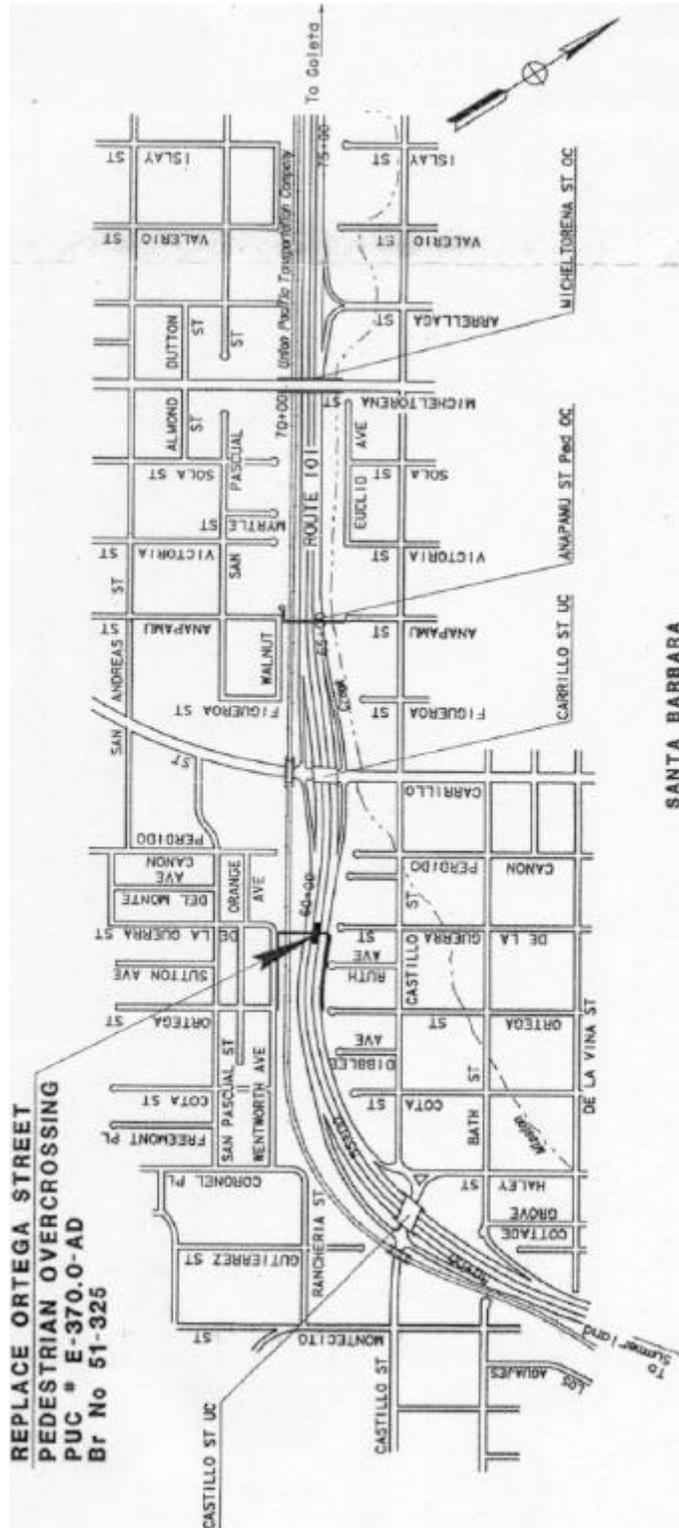
7. This authorization shall expire if not exercised within three years unless time is extended or if the above conditions are not complied with. Authorization may be revoked or modified if public convenience, necessity, or safety so require. The application is granted as set forth above.

Application 00-05-038 is closed.

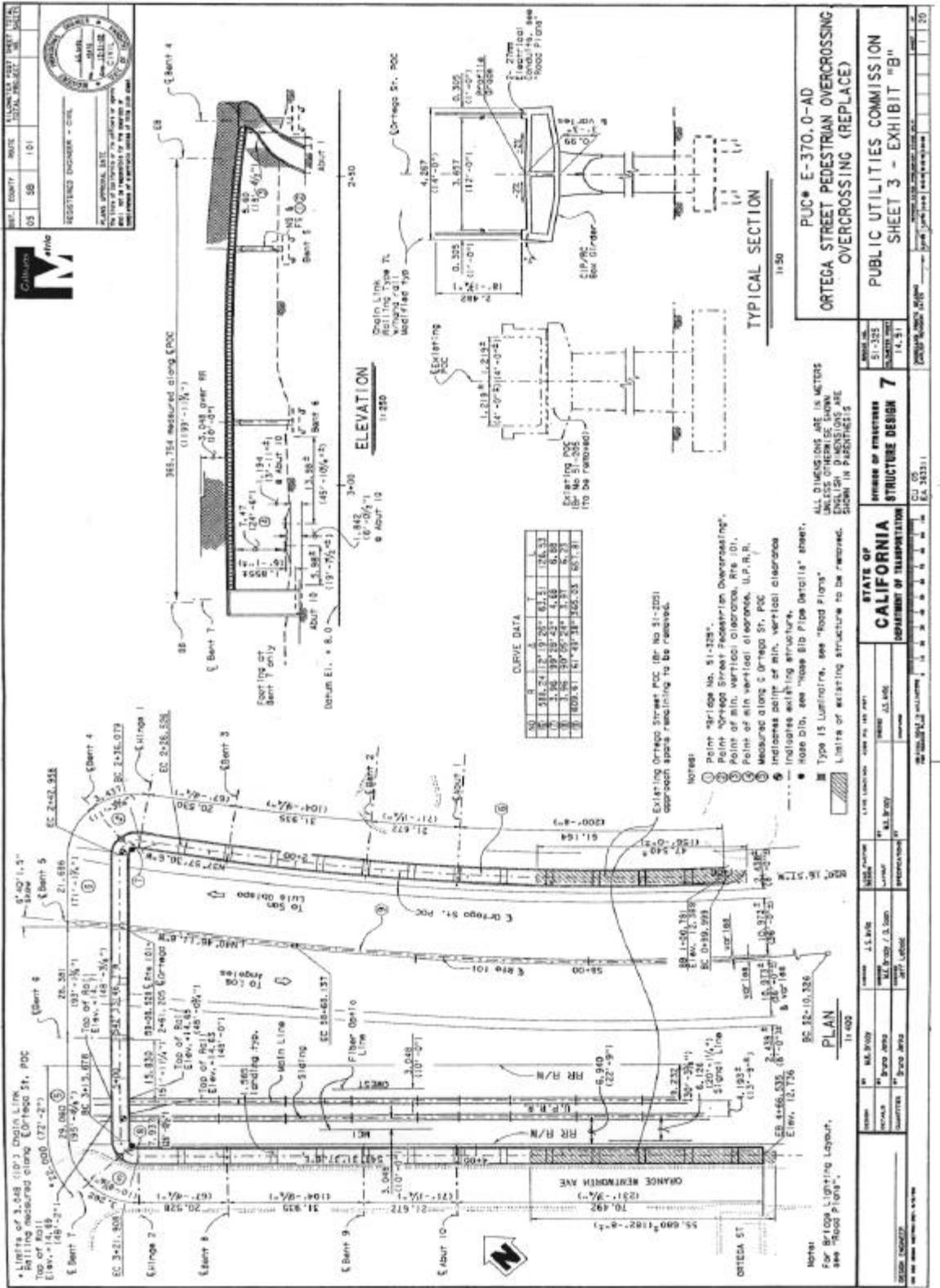
This order is effective 30 days from today.

Dated September 07, 2000 , at San Francisco, California.

LORETTA M. LYNCH
President
HENRY M. DUQUE
JOSIAH L. NEEPER
RICHARD A. BILAS
CARL W. WOOD
Commissioners



APPENDIX A (Map 1)



APPENDIX A (Map 2)