

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Consumer Protection and Safety Division  
Rail Transit and Crossings Branch  
Rail Crossings Engineering Section

Resolution SX-94  
November 20, 2009

**RESOLUTION**

RESOLUTION SX-94 GRANTING AUTHORIZATION TO THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO TO DEVIATE FROM THE PROVISIONS OF SUBSECTION 2.1 OF GENERAL ORDER 26-D BY ALLOWING THE EXISTING RESTRICTED HEIGHT CLEARANCE TO REMAIN AT THE GRADE-SEPARATED HIGHWAY-RAIL CROSSING (CPUC CROSSING NO. 001A-88.80-A) AT I STREET IN THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO IN SACRAMENTO COUNTY.

**SUMMARY**

In General Order (GO) 88-B request G.09-08-012, dated August 20, 2009, to relocate the two mainline tracks of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR), the City of Sacramento (City) requests an exemption from the provisions of Subsection 2.1 (Overhead Clearances) of GO 26-D. The request indicates that the vertical clearances of 21.7 feet for Mainline 1 and 21.48 feet for Mainline 2, an existing condition, cannot be corrected and they be allowed to persist. GO 26-D currently requires an overhead clearance of 22.5 feet, but Section 15 of the GO does allow the Commission to consider requests for continuance of impaired clearances already existing and lawful at the time the General Order was adopted. This resolution authorizes the requested exemption.

## **DISCUSSION**

The I Street Bridge is a double-deck combined rail and vehicle structure spanning the Sacramento River with vehicles on the upper deck and trains on the lower. The bridge and its approaches were built in 1913 with a 21 foot fixed clearance above the top of the rails. That clearance has been maintained, and exists to this day.

In G.09-08-012, the City requests authorization to relocate the two mainline tracks just east of the bridge structure under the eastern I Street approach as part of the Downtown Railyards Renovation Project.

As part of the Sacramento Railyards project, the tracks from the I Street Bridge through the entire railyards project property are being shifted northward to accommodate a new/relocated Amtrak Station as well as other aspects of the project. The track shift requires that the tracks nearest the east end of the bridge and underneath the I Street approach ramp be shifted slightly north, as that is the approximate location where the tracks begin their shift to the north.

However, the location at the east end of the bridge is currently not meeting the effective GO 26-D overhead clearance requirement of 22.5 feet above top of rail. The City, with UPRR's agreement and concurrence, proposes to allow the current clearances to persist because only the reconstruction of the I Street Bridge or the I Street approach ramp would allow an opportunity to bring the location to current standard. Due to its location so close to the end of the bridge, the elevation of track substructure cannot be lowered, and the overhead I Street approach ramps cannot be raised without replacement of the entire structure.

Subsection 2.1 of GO 26-D states "The minimum overhead clearance above railroad and street railroad tracks, which are used or proposed to be used for transporting freight cars, shall be twenty-two (22) feet six (6) inches. Structures constructed prior to the effective date of this order may be maintained at such clearances as was lawful at the time of construction."

Section 15 of GO 26-D allows the Commission to consider specific requests for the future continuance of heretofore lawful clearances when facilities are relocated or reconstructed provided application has been made as per

subsection 16.2 of the GO. Subsection 16.2 of GO 26-D allows the Commission to consider the application for such exemption when accompanied by a full statement of the conditions existing and the reason why such exemption is asked.

In its concurrence letter dated August 17, 2009, UPRR states that they have no objections to the I Street track relocation project as proposed in G.09-08-012.

Rail Crossings Engineering Section staff has reviewed the City's request and concur that the existing height clearances be maintained until such time as the I Street Bridge structure or I Street approach structure is reconstructed to allow the clearance to be brought to current standard.

### **NOTICE**

On October 20, 2009, City of Sacramento's request to deviate from the provisions of Subsection 2.1 of GO 26-D was published on the Commission's Daily Calendar.

This is an uncontested matter in which the resolution grants the relief requested. Accordingly, pursuant to Section 311(g)(2) of the Public Utilities Code and Rule 41.6(c)(2) of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, the otherwise applicable 30-day period for public review and comment is waived.

### **FINDINGS**

1. The City, in G.09-08-012, dated August 20, 2009, requests an exemption from the provisions of Subsection 2.1 (Overhead Clearances) of GO 26-D for the grade-separated crossing at I Street (CPUC Crossing No. 001A-88.80-A) over the UPRR tracks in the City.
2. In its concurrence letter dated August 17, 2009, UPRR states that they have no objections to the I Street track relocation project as proposed in G.09-08-012.
3. Section 16.2 of GO 26-D allows for exemptions (deviations) from the requirements of GO 26-D
4. Staff has reviewed the proposal and finds that the request has merit and should be granted.



**THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED THAT:**

The City of Sacramento is authorized to deviate from the provisions of Subsection 2.1 of General Order 26-D by maintaining the clearance above top of rail of 21.7 feet on mainline 1 and 21.48 feet on mainline 2 at the I Street (CPUC Crossing No. 001A-88.80-A) grade-separated crossing until such time as the I Street Bridge structure or I Street approach structure is reconstructed to allow the clearance to be brought to current standard.

This resolution is effective today.

I hereby certify that this resolution was adopted by the Public Utilities Commission at its regular meeting on November 20, 2009, the following Commissioners approving it:

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PAUL CLANON  
Executive Director