

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Consumer Protection & Safety Division
Rail Safety & Crossing Branch
Rail Crossings Engineering Section

Resolution SX-53
January 16, 2003

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION GRANTING THE REQUEST OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS AND CHANGES TO THE LOCATION OF LIGHT RAIL VEHICLE SIGNALS AND SIGNS USED ALONG THE STREET-RUNNING SECTION OF THE LOS ANGELES TO LONG BEACH METRO BLUE LINE LIGHT RAIL LINE, IN CITY OF LONG BEACH, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES.

Summary

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA), by a letter dated May 13, 2002, requests authorization from the Commission to make improvements and changes to the location of the Light Rail Vehicle (LRV) signals and signs at 31 at-grade highway-rail crossings (listed in Appendix C) on the street-running section of the Los Angeles to Long Beach Metro Blue Line (Blue Line) light rail line along Long Beach Boulevard, 1st Street, Pacific Avenue, and 8th Street in City of Long Beach (City), County of Los Angeles. The modifications include replacing “T” shaped LRV signals with bar shaped ones and moving them from the end of the traffic signal mast arms to the top of the masts, and replacing passive LRV symbol signs with illuminated “Train” signs, which will be activated by an approaching LRV. LACMTA expects that the proposed changes would help to avoid left-turn accidents, which have happened as a result of motor vehicles making left turns into the path of LRVs. This Resolution authorizes LACMTA’s request.

Background

LACMTA was created on April 1, 1993 by the California Legislature pursuant to Section 130050.20 of the Public Utilities Code to be the successor agency to the Southern California Rapid Transit District and the Los Angeles County

Transportation Commission (LACTC). LACMTA is the primary provider of transit-related services for the Southern California region, it funds and operates an extensive bus network and light rail systems including the Blue Line.

The at-grade highway-rail crossings subject of this resolution were authorized by Commission Decision (D.) 90-03-050 issued on March 28, 1990 in Application (A.) 88-07-033 filed by LACTC and D.90-05-074 issued on May 22, 1990 in A.89-12-045 also filed by LACTC. Both decisions authorized the current configuration of the subject signs and signals, which are shown in Appendix A. By Resolution SX-20 issued on April 1, 1999, the CPUC authorized the changes to the LRV signals and signs on the street-running portion of the Blue Line along Flower Street and Washington Boulevard in City of Los Angeles. Since making these changes, the rate of accidents resulting from vehicles making left-turns in front of an oncoming LRVs have decreased. The Los Angeles to Pasadena Metro Blue Line Construction Authority (PBLCA), which is currently constructing the Los Angeles to Pasadena Metro Gold Line (Gold Line), which was formerly known as the Pasadena Metro Blue Line, also requested making the same modifications to the LRV signals and signs in the street-running section of the Gold Line along Marmion Way. On November 21, 2002 the CPUC authorized Resolution SX-51, which grants the authority requested by PBLCA to make the same modifications requested by LACMTA.

Discussion

The proposed changes include replacing the passive black and white LRV symbol signs now located below the “T” shaped LRV signals at the end of the cantilevered traffic signal arm with an LRV-activated fiber optic illuminated “Train” signs, which is intended as a warning for motorists and pedestrians of an approaching LRV. The proposed changes also include replacing the “T” shaped LRV signals now mounted on the top of the passive LRV symbol signs with bar shaped signals and moving them from the end of the traffic signal mast arms to the top of the traffic signal masts. These signals are intended as traffic signals for LRV operators. These LRV signals are different in color and shape (they are lunar white in color and bar shaped) than the usual red-yellow-green circular traffic signals in order not to confuse motorists. Appendix B shows the proposed configuration.

LACMTA LRV operators will operate both the Blue and Gold Lines. Positioning the LRV signals on the street-running section of the Blue Line in City of Long

Beach in the same manner as the street running section of the Blue and Gold Lines in City of Los Angeles will avoid confusion to the LRV operators.

The proposed change in the position of these signals on traffic signals masts will also help in avoiding confusion to motorists. In the street-running section of the Blue and Gold Lines, the LRVs travel through the center of the roadway. A motorist attempting to make a left turn may accidentally drive in front of an LRV approaching from behind or from the opposite direction. The fiber optic “Train” sign is primarily designed to warn motorists making these types of left-turn movements. In the figure shown in Appendix A, the “T” shaped LRV signals are placed at the end of the traffic signal mast arm; this usually is the location where motorists would expect left-turn arrow signals. Therefore, motorists might confuse the “T” shaped signals for a green left-turn arrow signal. In the figure shown in Appendix B, the fiber optic “Train” sign is located at the end of the traffic signal mast arm. Motorists attempting to make a left turn will have this sign in front of them, and will be alerted that an LRV is approaching from either behind or from the opposite direction. This warning, in addition to the red left-turn arrow, will inform motorists not to make the left turn. Also, the configuration shown in Appendix B has the bar shaped LRV signals on the traffic signal mast, as far away as possible from the view of motorists making a left turn.

Commission’s Rail Crossings Engineering Section (RCES) has reviewed the documents submitted by LACMTA, and has concluded that the proposal will improve the safety of the at-grade highway-rail crossings listed in Appendix C. Furthermore, City of Long Beach has informed RCES that it is in support of this project.

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

Findings

1. LACMTA requests approval to modify the plans submitted by its predecessor (LACTC) with A.88-07-033 which were approved by D.90-03-050 and A.89-12-045 which were approved by D.90-05-047, relating to the construction of at-grade highway-rail crossings on the street-running segment of the Blue Line. The proposed modifications involve making improvements and changing the

location of LRV signals and signs in the street-running section of the Blue Line along Long Beach Boulevard, 1st Street, Pacific Avenue, and 8th Street in City of Long Beach, County of Los Angeles, and as more fully described in Appendix C.

2. City has informed RCES that it supports this project.
3. RCES has reviewed the proposal and finds that the request has merit and should be granted.

Therefore, IT IS ORDERED that:

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority is granted authority to modify the plans submitted by its predecessor, the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission, with Application (A.) 88-07-033, which were approved by Decision (D.) 90-03-050, and A.89-12-045, which was approved by D.90-05-047. The proposed modifications include replacing “T” shaped Light Rail Vehicle (LRV) signals with bar shaped signals and moving them from the end of the traffic signal mast arms to the top of the masts, and replacing passive LRV symbol signs with illuminated “Train” signs, which will be activated by an approaching LRV, as shown in Appendices A and B. These modifications shall be applied to 31 at-grade highway-rail crossings (listed in Appendix C) along Long Beach Boulevard, 1st Street, Pacific Avenue, and 8th Street in City of Long Beach, County of Los Angeles.

This Resolution is effective today.

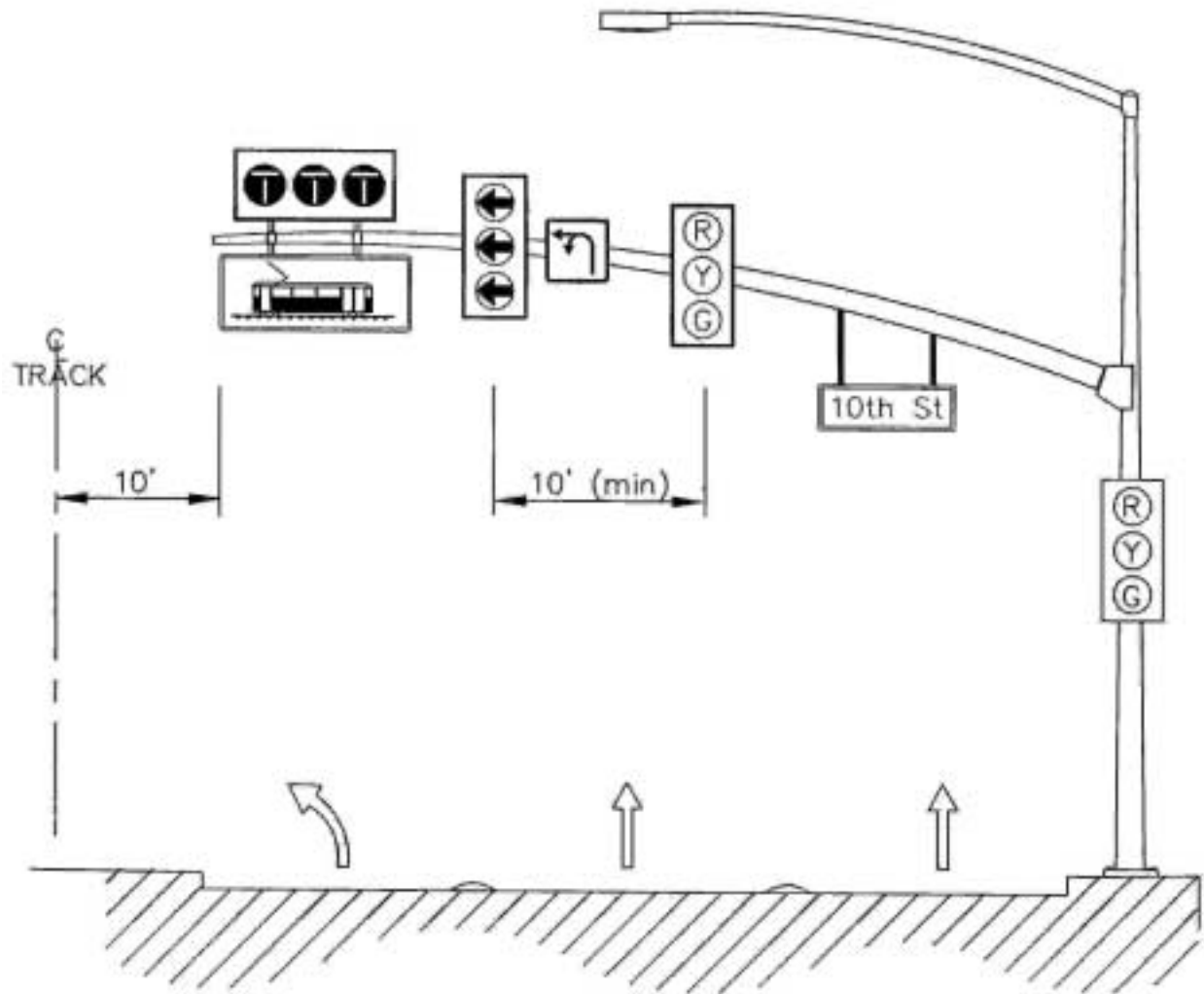
I certify that the foregoing resolution was duly introduced, passed, and adopted by the Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on January 16, 2003. The following Commissioners voted favorably thereon:

/s/ WESLEY M. FRANKLIN
WESLEY M. FRANKLIN
Executive Director

MICHAEL R. PEEVEY
President
CARL W. WOOD
LORETTA M. LYNCH

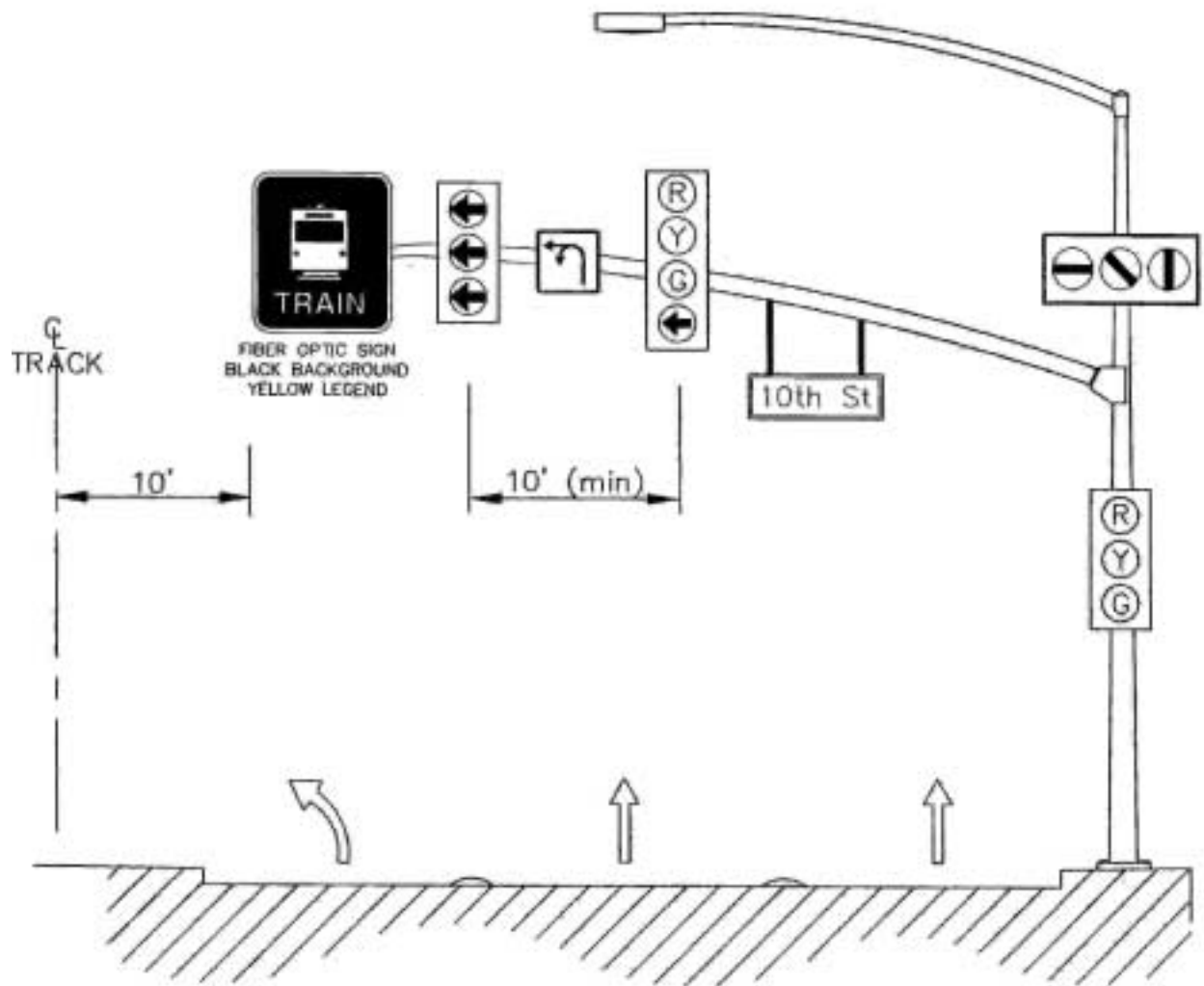
GEOFFREY F. BROWN
SUSAN P. KENNEDY
Commissioners

APPENDIX A

EXISTING CONFIGURATION OF
LRV SIGNALS AND SIGNS

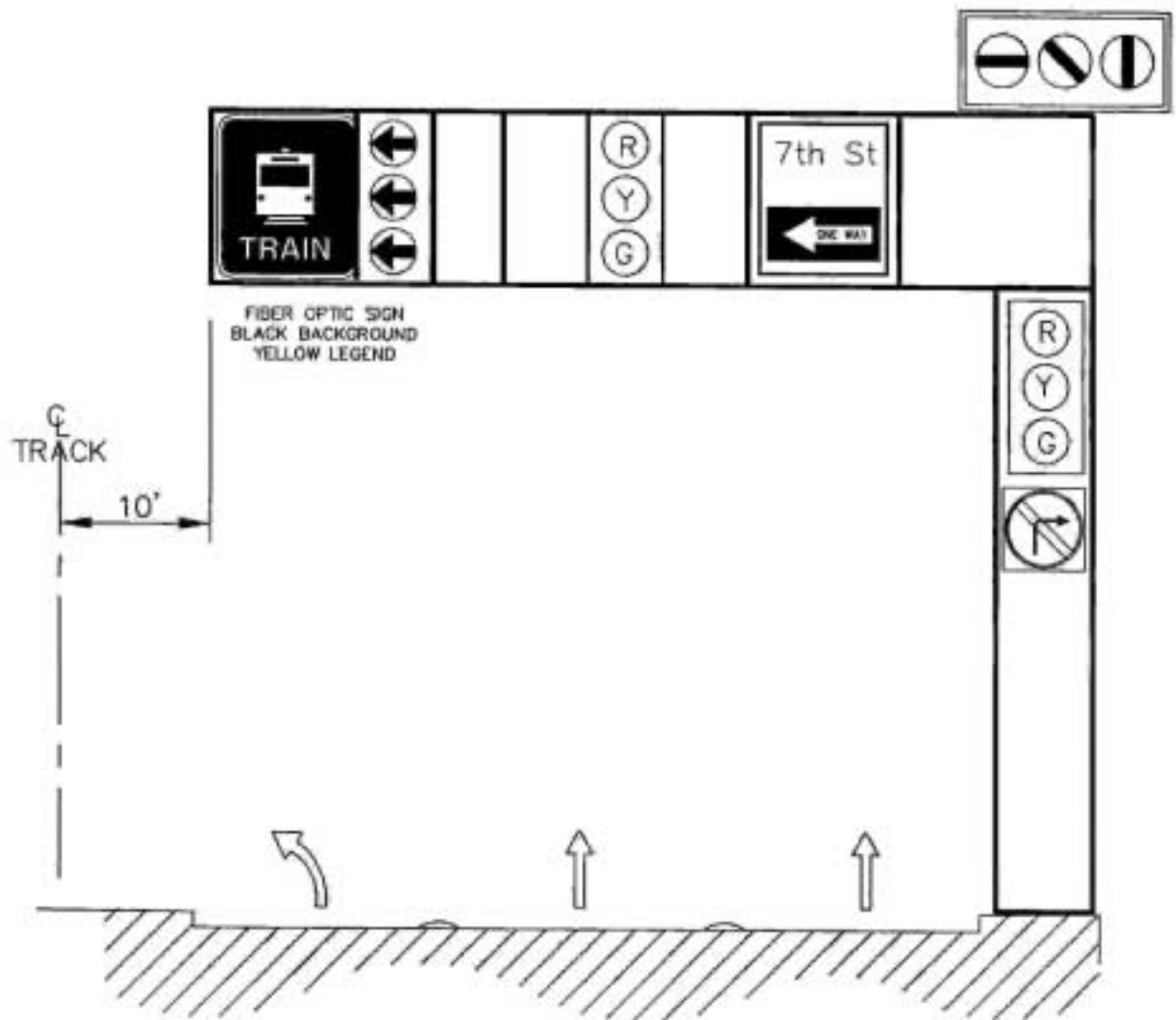
Notice that a sign with a Light Rail Vehicle (LRV) symbol is attached to the end of the traffic signal mast arm, and on top of it are the "T" shaped signals for LVR operators.

APPENDIX B

PROPOSED CONFIGURATION OF
LRV SIGNALS AND SIGNS

Notice that a fiber optic "Train" sign is attached to the end of the traffic signal mast arm, where it would be directly in front of a motorist attempting a left turn movement. The bar shaped signals for LVR operators is attached to the top of the traffic signal mast, where it is as far away as possible from the view of motorists attempting a left turn.

APPENDIX B

PROPOSED CONFIGURATION OF
LRV SIGNALS AND SIGNS

In this configuration the location of the "Train" sign and the bar shaped LRV signals are the same as the previous figure. The only difference is that the shape of the traffic signal structure is different.

APPENDIX C

LIST OF
AT-GRADE HIGHWAY-RAIL CROSSINGS
SUBJECT OF THIS RESOLUTION

CPUC Crossing Number	Street Name
084L - 18.50	LONG BEACH BL
084L - 18.60	WILLOW ST
084L - 18.90	BURNETT ST
084L - 19.10	HILL ST
084L - 19.40	20TH ST
084L - 19.50	19TH ST
084L - 19.60	PACIFIC COAST HWY
084L - 19.80	16TH ST
084L - 20.00	14TH ST
084L - 20.10	ANAHEIM ST
084L - 20.40	10TH ST
084L - 20.50	8TH ST
084L - 20.60	7TH ST
084L - 20.70	6TH ST
084L - 20.90	4TH ST
084L - 20.96	3RD ST & LONG BEACH
084L - 21.00	BROADWAY @ LONG BEACH
084L - 21.10	1ST & LONG BEACH BL
084L - 21.20	LOCUST AV (PROMENADE)
084L - 21.30	PINE AV @ 1ST ST
084L - 21.40	1ST ST & PACIFIC AV
084L - 21.50	BROADWAY & PACIFIC
084L - 21.55	3RD ST & PACIFIC AV
084L - 21.60	4TH ST & PACIFIC AV
084L - 21.70	5TH ST & PACIFIC AV
084L - 21.80	6TH ST & PACIFIC AV
084L - 21.90	7TH ST & PACIFIC AV
084L - 21.96	8TH ST & PACIFIC AV
084L - 22.00	PINE AV & 8TH ST
084L - 22.10	LOCUST ST & 8TH ST
084L - 22.20	LONG BEACH & 8TH ST