

# **Instructions for Completing a Request to CPUC Staff for Authorization to Alter a Highway-Rail Crossing Pursuant to General Order 88-B**

## **I. CRITERIA FOR GO 88-B AUTHORIZATION REQUEST PROJECTS**

Review the Scope of General Order (GO) 88-B projects listed below. If your project falls outside of this scope, then a formal application must be filed with the Commission's Docket Office for Commission authorization to alter a highway-rail crossing.

### Scope of GO 88-B

1. Grade crossing widening within the existing street right-of-way.
2. Approach grade changes.
3. Track elevation changes.
4. Roadway realignment that is functionality related to the existing crossing and can be achieved within the existing or a contiguous right-of-way.
5. Addition of one track within the existing railroad right-of-way.
6. Change in the type or addition of an automatic signaling device, crossing gate, crossing flagman or other forms of crossing protection or reduction of hours during which any such protection is maintained, or other minor alterations.
7. Alterations or reconstruction of an existing grade-separated crossing, where exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to California Public Resources (PR) Code Section 21080.13.
8. Construction of a grade-separation that eliminates an existing at-grade highway-rail crossing, where exempt from CEQA pursuant to PR Code Section 21080.13

In addition to meeting the above criteria, all interested parties, including Commission staff, must agree to the project. If any party objects to the proposed project, then a formal application must be filed.

## **II. GO 88-B AUTHORIZATION REQUEST PROCESS**

1. Contact Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch (RCEB) staff assigned to the area. The link below has territory assignment maps for RCEB staff.

<http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/crossings/>

The area engineer will provide information on the GO 88-B process and advise the requesting party on arranging a field diagnostic meeting to review proposed alterations to the crossing.

2. The diagnostic meeting should then be held with all interested parties (rail organization, roadway authority, and RCEB staff). The diagnostic team should evaluate the proposed modifications and identify any other matters that should be addressed as part of the modifications proposed. The requesting party will be able to determine whether RCEB staff is in agreement with the proposed modifications and allow the other parties to form a basis for providing the required evidence of agreement (see below).
3. The requesting party should update its modification plans based on reviews and comments provided by interested parties during the diagnostic meeting.
4. Obtain written concurrence of the rail organization and/or roadway authority with jurisdiction at the crossing.
5. Complete and send the GO 88-B authorization request form (follow instructions in Section III below). The form must be signed by a roadway authority or rail organization official, it cannot be signed by a consultant on behalf of a roadway authority or rail organization.
6. Submit completed form, attachments, and evidence of concurrence signed by interested parties to RCEB. Electronic files are preferred in scanned, PDF/A format. Please confirm with the appropriate engineer if submitting alternate formats. Large files can be transferred to CPUC staff using the site <http://cpucftp.cpuc.ca.gov/>

Send to the following contacts:

- 1) Engineer Assigned to the Area

Please refer to <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/crossings/> for contact information of the appropriate engineer assigned to the area.

- 2) RCEB Supervisors

Please send an electronic copy to the Senior Utilities Engineer Supervisor and/or Program and Project Supervisor in the appropriate region.

Northern California: Felix Ko, P.E., [felix.ko@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:felix.ko@cpuc.ca.gov) and  
Gina Adams: [gina.adams@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:gina.adams@cpuc.ca.gov)

Southern California: Anh Truong, P.E., [anh.truong@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:anh.truong@cpuc.ca.gov) and  
Matthew Bond, P.E.: [matthew.bond@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:matthew.bond@cpuc.ca.gov)

- 3) Railroad or Roadway agency (interested parties)

### III. GO 88-B AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FILL-IN FORM

After a field diagnostic meeting is held and modifications are agreed to by the interested parties, complete the GO 88-B authorization request fill-in form as follows:

1. Date. Self-explanatory.
2. Applicant Info. Self-explanatory, except that the Contact Person should be the agency representative to whom the reply will be sent.
3. Crossing proposed to be altered. RCEB staff member will provide you the CPUC and U.S. DOT assigned crossing numbers.
  - a. The railroad must provide current train volume and maximum speed information at the crossing location for all railroads and rail transit agencies operating on the rail corridor.
    - i. Passenger: This includes commuter railroad service or passenger railroad service, such as Amtrak.
    - ii. Freight: This includes freight railroad service, such as Union Pacific Railroad.
    - iii. Transit: This includes light rail transit service such as Los Angeles County MTA.
  - b. The roadway agency must provide the most current average daily traffic (ADT) counts for the roadway at the crossing location. The ADT counts should not be older than 5 years.
  - c. For construction of a grade-separation that eliminates an existing at-grade highway-rail crossing, the railroad must provide a new U.S. DOT number.
4. Describe Proposed Alterations. This should include a description of roadway changes through the crossing, as well as changes to warning devices, signs, signals, pavement markings, railroad circuitry or other significant aspects of the crossing to be modified.

*Example:*

The proposed alteration consists of widening the existing two-lane highway to include four 12-ft lanes, a 16-foot median, and two 6-ft sidewalks. Traffic signals will be installed at the

intersection 50-ft north of crossing and will be interconnected with the rail crossing warning devices, as detailed in the plans attached as Appendix \_\_\_\_\_.

The City will install four new “DO NOT STOP ON TRACKS” (MUTCD R8-8) signs. Existing pavement markings and signage will be maintained or reinstalled as shown in the plans attached as Appendix \_\_\_\_\_.

Discuss any proposed variance(s) from GO minimum clearance requirements. If the GO 88-B request is for construction of a grade separation structure replacing an existing at-grade crossing or is for reconstruction or alteration of an existing grade separation structure, AND a temporary reduced clearance is necessary, A VARIANCE MUST BE SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED IN THIS SECTION.

GO 26-D specifies the minimum vertical clearances (22 feet 6 inches if roadway is over the railroad, and 15 feet if the railroad is over the roadway) and horizontal clearances (8.5 feet from centerline of tangent track). A variance allowing for a temporary impaired clearance may be granted through the GO 88-B approval process, but the applicant must notify the railroad and the Commission’s Rail Operations Safety Branch and RCEB in advance of creating the impaired clearance, and subsequently the railroad must notify its operating employees. The concurrence letter from the owning and/or maintaining railroad (as required by part 10 of the fill-in form, below) MUST acknowledge the temporary impaired clearance, and agree to it in their concurrence correspondence.

*Design documentation:* Include the following documents to the extent applicable:

- A. *Signage and Striping Plan:* Plans that show all pavement markings, parking restriction and signage.
- B. *Crossing Exhibit:* Plans that show the location and clearance of all railroad warning devices.

For crossing alterations at or near a signalized highway intersection:

- C. *Preemption Timing Worksheet:* Worksheets should be one of the three forms: LADOT, TxDOT, and/or Caltrans. When included as part of the GO 88-B request, the timing should be the actual proposed timing.
- D. *Preemption Calculation Measurement Exhibit:* Exhibit shows the Minimum Track Clearance Distance (MTCD), Clear Storage Distance (CSD), the longest pedestrian crosswalk distance and other distance parameters shown in the preemption worksheet.

- E. *Traffic signal plan*: Scaled exhibit showing the location of existing and proposed traffic control and railroad warning devices with the following information:
    - I. Phase Diagram
    - II. Phase sequence upon preemption (or comparable description)
    - III. Traffic signal masts and signal heads
    - IV. Part-time turn restriction (Blank-out) signs (if used)
    - V. Information on railroad interface panel (if used)
  - F. *Preemption Interconnect Wiring Diagram*
  - G. *Railroad Preemption Request Form* (if applicable)
  - H. *Design-Vehicle Turning Template* (where applicable)
5. Describe the public benefits to be achieved by the proposed alterations.  
*Example:*  
The public will benefit from the proposed project through improvements to both public safety and convenience. Traffic congestion and associated vehicle queues across the track will be reduced through the addition of one lane in each direction. The installation of medians is intended to reduce the possibility of motorists driving around the lowered Commission Standard No. 9 gate arms. The installation of roadway intersection traffic signals and preemption will allow motorists to more efficiently clear the tracks as a train approaches.
6. Explain why a separation of grades is not practicable. Please note practicability is not solely a function of cost.  
*Example:*  
Due to existing buildings and other facilities located in the immediate vicinity of the crossing, it would be physically impracticable to construct a grade-separated crossing.
7. Describe the existing and proposed crossing warning devices  
*Example:*  
The existing railroad warning devices consist of two Commission Standard 8s (flashing light signals). It is proposed to replace them with two median-mounted Commission Standard 9s (flashing light signal with automatic gate arm) and two curb-mounted Commission Standard 9As (Standard 9 with additional flashing light signals on a cantilevered mast arm) warning devices.

8. Temporary Traffic Controls - Include a statement of temporary traffic controls to be provided during construction in compliance with Section 8A.05 Temporary Traffic Control Zones, of the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, (CA MUTCD):

*Example:*

Appendix \_\_\_ is a copy of the latest traffic control plan prepared for the project. During construction, temporary traffic control, including temporary crossing closures and detours will be provided in accordance with the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, Section 8A.05 and Figure 6H-46. [Rail agency name] will provide flagging services to warn roadway traffic of approaching trains at any time that the traffic control devices or traffic signals are not in service.

9. CEQA (Applicable only to grade-separation projects). If the project involves grade separation of an existing at grade crossing, then either a copy of the Notice of Exemption from CEQA or other factual evidence that the project is exempt from Public Resources Code Section 21080.13 must be provided:

The applicant should provide a Notice of Exemption or a statement indicating why the project is exempt.

*Example:*

This project involves widening and reconstructing the existing grade separated crossing which is statutorily exempt pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.13.

10. Signature - This form must be signed by a government or railroad agency official. It cannot be signed by a consultant on behalf of a government or railroad agency.
11. Evidence of Agreement - Send completed form to interested parties, and ask them to complete this section and return it to you. Evidence of concurrence must not be dated more than two years before the date of the GO 88-B request form. Evidence of concurrence must be obtained from each involved party, including each rail agency responsible for maintaining the crossing warning devices and/or owning the rail right-of-way (see exception below) and the public agency responsible for the roadway, depending on who is submitting the request for authorization.

Evidence of concurrence is not required from county transportation authorities, such as Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA), which own the rail right-of-way maintained by joint powers authorities, such as Southern California Regional Rail Authority. However, evidence of concurrence is required from county transportation authorities for projects involving crossings that are maintained by these agencies, such as light rail transit crossings maintained by LACMTA. Page four of the fill-in form can be replaced by an actual letter(s) containing a similar statement of concurrence, or electronic mail

indicating concurrence with the project is acceptable, provided it identifies the individual providing the concurrence by name, title and organization.

If agreement of the involved parties cannot be obtained, then a formal Application must be filed with the Commission's Docket Office to gain Commission approval for the proposed modifications.