

## PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298

January 23, 2004

File No. 183-44

Luis Pavel Mendez  
Senior Transportation Planner  
Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission  
1523 Pacific Avenue  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060-3911

## Highway-Rail Crossing Improvements Recommendations for Proposed Trolley Service

Dear Mr. Mendez:

The following are initial recommendations for safety improvements to the highway-rail at-grade crossings reviewed during our safety diagnostic inspections on January 21, 2004.

It is highly recommended that all four highway-rail crossings that are currently un-gated be equipped with CPUC Standard No. 9s (flashing light signals with automatic gates). If the Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission does not wish to install gates at all of these locations, each crossing can be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Criteria for this evaluation will be based upon an improvement in sight distances and speed restrictions that will be based upon the stopping capabilities of the trolley incorporating the improved sight distance.

Other recommended improvements specific to each crossing are:

Grove Lane

- Concrete panels for crossing surface.
- Improved approach grades and A/C surface for approaches.

New Brighton

- Concrete panels for crossing surface.
- Widen crossing to minimum 24 foot width.
- Decrease approach grade on south side of the crossing.

Estates Drive

- Install a bulb-out in the northwest quadrant of the crossing to effectively control parking near warning device to improve its visibility.

Aptos Creek Road

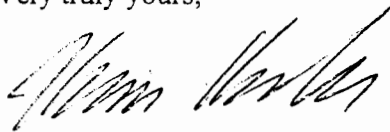
- Concrete panels for crossing surface.
- Consider a "Pre signal" signalization design.
- Signalization with back-up batteries could negate the need for gates at this crossing.

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In addition to the proposed trolley project, please keep Commission staff informed on the progress of the Aptos Town redevelopment plans as they pertain to the rail corridor.

If you have any questions in this matter, please call me at (415) 703-2795.

Very truly yours,



Kevin Boles  
Utilities Engineer  
Rail Crossings Engineering Section  
Consumer Protection and Safety Division

cc: Robert W. Scott, P.E. Project Management  
Gary Guttebo, Santa Cruz, Big Trees & Pacific Railway  
Patrick Kerr, Union Pacific Railroad