

EXPO'S RESPONSE TO RCES' PROTEST for the Trade Tech Driveways 3/23/07

The Rail Crossing Engineering Section (RCES) of the California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) protested the Application (#07-01-017) of the Exposition Metro Line Construction Authority regarding the authority for construction of a two-track at-grade crossing for the Expo Light Rail Transit across the Los Angeles Trade Technical College's eight (8) driveways based on several grounds. The following are Expo Authority's response to each of the six grounds:

Ground No. 1: Hazard Analysis provided by Expo did not convincingly demonstrate that all eight driveways need to remain open into the crossings.

Response: Trade Tech's major argument for keeping all the driveways open is that each driveway leads to a unique and different class room. Although there is physical connection between classrooms inside the building, the classes close their roll-down doors when conducting their separate classes, and do not want to have vehicles from one class drive thru another class because of disruption and it's not safe. Furthermore, closing the driveways today will affect the planned Program expansion on the campus, and affect the flexibility in utilizing these class rooms. Trade Tech's justification for keeping each driveway, door-by-door, is as follows:

Dwy. 1 (Machine Shop/Welding): There's an extensive and elaborate crane set-up within this Machine Shop/Welding building. There needs to be access for 18-20 foot flat bed trucks for delivery of materials, including scrap metal. It's typically done with a dual axel truck, and the loading bay has a set-back from the curb to allow trucks to park off the street and sidewalk. It is also possible to have 40 foot semi-trailer making deliveries using this driveway. The delivery is infrequent, and usually no more than once a week. However, the Shop arranges for their delivery, and the delivery is always coordinate with the Shop manager. This driveway is also used for receiving liquid oxygen and other gas deliveries, which are also coordinated. The gas trucks must be able to enter this driveway and park next to the building wall. This delivery is also infrequent, and no more than once a week.

Dwy. 2 (Exit Dwy.): When the oxygen and other gas deliveries are made, the trucks must park next to the building where they hook-up to the gas lines. So, the EXIT driveway is used to allow the dual axel trucks to go forward, rather than having to back-up. Once again, this driveway may be used no more than once a week.

Dwy. 3 (Motorcycle Technology): This driveway leads to not just one class room but several smaller class rooms, including diesel engine, motorcycle engine, rear-end, and alternative fuel classes. Currently some students are allowed to bring-in their personal cars and Sports Utility Vehicles (SUVs) when pre-arranged, but typically the driveway is closed.

Dwy. 4 (Collision Repair): There are about 30 bays in the Body Shop, and students are able to bring-in their vehicles for repair. Body repair takes a long time, so

even though there are many bays, typically no more than half dozen cars and SUVs would enter and exit this driveway on a daily basis. However, some of the vehicles are not able to be driven, so a tow truck would need to bring-in the vehicles.

Dwy. 5 (Automotive Technology): There are about 30 bays here as well. Auto repair also take a long time, so even though there are many bays, typically no more than a half dozen cars and SUVs belonging to students that would enter and exit this driveway on a daily basis. This driveway also leads to parking spaces in the back where vehicles to be repaired or repaired vehicles could be stored, and in the past vacant spaces were used as student parking, as well as parking for the shop teachers. Trade Tech informed Expo that they no longer allow student parking here. Once again, some of these vehicles do not run, so the vehicles would be brought to the Shop by a tow truck.

Dwy. 6 (Consumer Assistance): This is a general public use driveway. The State's Consumer Affairs allows for vehicles to be brought here when they are protesting smog check results. The public must make an appointment, and up to 8 appointments are set daily, but usually only about half of the public show-up based on field observations and discussions with Trade Tech. These vehicles are generally cars and SUVs.

Dwy. 7 (Diesel Technology/Central Delivery): This driveway is currently not in use and the area is under construction. However, this driveway will be reconstructed and widened to be the central delivery driveway for the campus. It will also be access to the Diesel Technology shops. Therefore, there will be more traffic here in the future than today. It is forecasted that more than 40 to 50 trucks per day will be using this driveway. Most of the trucks will be dual axel vehicles, such as FED EX , UPS and US Mail trucks. However, 40 foot trucks may also use this driveway.

Dwy. 8 (Parking Lot): This driveway will lead to the existing roof top parking area above the Auto Shop classrooms. The existing access to the roof top parking is being relocated to Flower Street. This driveway will be signalized with the standard traffic signals. The parking lot has 400 spaces and with a turnover of these spaces throughout the day, about 1200 student automobiles are expected to enter and exit this driveway.

Ground No. 2: The application fails to provide necessary information such as the number and frequency of the trains that will use the eight crossings.

Response: Metro plans to have the following train schedules: 4 minute services for peak periods, 10 minute service for mid-day, and 20 minute services for early morning and night time. Therefore, a total of about 240 trains per day (both directions) will be crossing these eight crossings.

Ground No. 3: The application fails to provide necessary information such as expected vehicular traffic volumes at the eight crossings. The application fails to identify the type of traffic using each of the crossings.

Response: As noted above, typically no more than 40 automobiles per day will be crossing six of the driveways, while there will be about 80 to 100 dual-axel trucks crossing the delivery driveway, and about 2400 automobiles will be crossing the signalized driveway to the roof top parking per day. About once a week, a dual axel truck would be using the Metal Shop/Welding driveway (Dwy. 1) and EXITing at driveway 2. Among the rest of the 4 driveways, Consumer Affairs driveway (Dwy. 6) would have general public traffic, while all other driveways will only have students and teacher vehicles, and occasional tow trucks. In terms of pedestrians accessing these facilities, about 10 students in total were observed using Driveways 3, 4, and 5 or the doors next to these driveways during a typical day. The are Shop doors adjacent to the roll-up garage doors at each of the three Driveways 3, 4 and 5. There were no other pedestrian activities observed among the other driveways.

Ground No. 4: The application indicates that the driveways are 16 feet to 28 feet deep, including the sidewalk. But the application fails to describe the type of vehicular traffic using each driveway. Therefore, RCES cannot evaluate the sufficiency of the storage space for the type of vehicle using each crossing.

Response: It should be noted that the current 15 foot sidewalk will be reduced to 10 feet when the Light Rail is constructed. LADOT intends to install signs that read "Do Not Stop on Tracks." However, there is sufficient depths in the driveways to accommodate at least one car length of storage in front of the roll-up garage doors, as described below:

Dwy. 1 has a covered loading area that's about 15 feet deep, beyond the 25 feet of distance from the street to the building, so the total storage area is about 40 feet in depth. Currently dual axel flat bed trucks that are about 28 to 30 feet long use this driveway.

Dwy. 2 is only used as an exit driveway during various gas deliveries, and there is no garage door opposite the driveway. The trucks are typically dual axel and no more than 28 to 30 feet long, and park parallel to the building. The total depth between the street and building is about 25 feet, including the 10 width for the sidewalk.

Dwy. 3 is 25 feet deep, including the sidewalk. Only student cars and SUVs use this driveway. Occasionally a tow truck would use this driveway. The width of the garage doorway is 12 feet.

Dwy. 4 is 25 feet deep, including the sidewalk. Students and teachers only use this driveway with their cars and SUVs. Occasionally a tow truck would use this driveway. The width of this garage doorway is 16 feet.

Dwy. 5 is 22 feet deep, including the sidewalk. Students only use this driveway. Occasionally a tow truck will use this driveway. The width of this garage doorway is 15 feet.

Dwy. 6 is about 14 feet deep, including the sidewalk. Since this driveway is open to the public, it's usually kept open all day long to accept cars and SUVs. The width of this garage doorway is 12 feet.

Dwy. 7 is 10 feet deep, which is the width of the sidewalk. Since this is the main delivery for the campus, Trade Tech intends to keep the gate open during the hours of 6 AM to 7 PM daily. The new driveway will be about 35 feet wide.

Dwy. 8 leads to a ramp that goes to the roof top parking, and the ramp is about 400 feet long. This is a signalized intersection, and access to the ramp as well egress from the ramp is going to be controlled by standard traffic signals that will have Green, Yellow and Red Arrows.

Ground No. 5: The application does not include provisions for traffic signals to control vehicular movement from the driveways on Flower Street. Once a vehicle is stopped on the tracks there is no active signal proposed to inform the driver of an approaching train. This is a significant safety concern.

Response: LADOT will be installing active TRAIN LED signs and NO LEFT TURN LED Symbols at all the entrances to the driveway, and active TRAIN LED signs coming out of the driveways. LADOT will also be installing static signs in both directions indicating to drivers not to stop on the tracks, as well as signs to say look both ways. LADOT has also created a storage area beyond the tracks for vehicles exiting the driveways. It is intended to allow vehicles to store and wait for gaps in traffic if drivers did not wait to enter Flower Street behind the tracks as signed. LADOT also pointed out that since the Active TRAIN LED signs are mounted on poles in the 4 foot island beyond the tracks, it is going to be visible if vehicles happen to stop on the tracks. What's significant to note is that since Flower Street is a one way street in the southbound direction, traffic is heavy during the evening peak hours between 4 PM and 7 PM. Morning traffic is around 300 vehicles per hour (vph) between Washington Boulevard and Adams Boulevard. During the mid-day it's about 500 (vph) and increases to about 800 vph around 3 PM. It peaks between 5 and 6 PM with about 1800 vph with a daily total volume of around 16,000. LADOT intends to allow curb parking most of the day, so there will be two moving lanes and a left-turn lane. During the evening peak period parking will be restricted, so there will be three (3) thru lanes and a left-turn lane on Flower Street.

All the Trade Tech driveways are not very active after 2:30 PM, with the exception that students arrive for evening classes using driveway number 8 between 5 and 6 PM. It is anticipated that the delivery traffic during the 3 to 6 PM period would be less than 10

trucks. The parking lot driveway traffic is estimated to be about 400 during the same 3 to 6 PM period and primarily heavy during the 5 to 6 PM period.

Ground No. 6: The proposed crossings create redundant crossings in close proximity to each other. The Expo Authority fails to consider the possible closure or consolidation of adjacent driveways with lower traffic volumes

Response: Trade Tech's position is that each driveway serves a unique classroom and can not be closed. Consolidation is also difficult, because the installation an access roadway connecting the driveways is only feasible between driveways 1 and 3. At other locations, is not possible to install a roadway that can accommodate vehicular turn movements and provide a safe passage for pedestrians

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