



Port Proposes to Close Small, Unsafe Roadway

Prohibiting car and truck traffic on Edison Avenue would eliminate railroad safety hazard

July 5, 2007

For the safety of motorists traveling through the Port of Long Beach, the Port is proposing to permanently close a short section of road on Port property, in West Long Beach, that is crossed by three active railroad tracks.

The proposed closure would prohibit cars and trucks on Edison Avenue between Ninth and Pier B streets, a 200-foot section traversed by three street-level railroad crossings with no gates or warning signals such as flashing lights. By rerouting cars and trucks to viable alternate routes in the area, the closure would eliminate a safety hazard.

“This section of road has been a concern for some time,” said Port Executive Director Richard D. Steinke. “By offering easy alternate routes, we can reduce traffic congestion and improve safety without impeding travel for motorists in the Port.”

The current configuration is potentially dangerous. There were 11 traffic accidents on this stretch of roadway from 2001 to 2005. Motorists turning onto Edison from Pier B Street, for example, immediately encounter the tracks without another stop. It has proved difficult for motorists to check both directions and accurately judge the speed of approaching trains.

The tracks are operated by the Pacific Harbor Line, a switching railroad under contract to the ports.

The Port has examined the project and prepared a “Negative Declaration” document under the California Environmental Quality Act, finding no significant environmental impacts from the closure.

The Board of Harbor Commissioners released the Negative Declaration for a 30-day public review and comment on July 2, 2007. The Board is scheduled to hold a public hearing July 16, 2007, during its regularly scheduled meeting, to solicit public comments. The public can also submit written comments through August 3 addressed to Dr. Robert Kanter, Managing Director of Environmental Affairs and Planning, Port of Long Beach, 925 Harbor Plaza, Long Beach, 90802.

After the public comment period, the Port will then take steps with the City of Long Beach to officially vacate the street. The Long Beach City Council will make the final decision on the notice and resolution to vacate Edison Avenue.

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