STATE OF CALIFORNIA GAVIN NEWSOM, *Governor*

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
320 WEST 4TH STREET, SUITE 500
LOS ANGELES, CA 90013

August 31, 2026 ENVR 20260800007

Carlos Rojas
Senior Planner
City of Norwalk
12700 Norwalk Boulevard
Norwalk, CA 90650

Re: 12500 Firestone Boulevard Project SCH 2024040140 – *Notice of Determination*

Dear Carlos Rojas,

The California Public Utilities Commission (Commission/CPUC) has jurisdiction over rail crossings (crossings) in California. CPUC ensures that crossings are safely designed, constructed, and maintained. The Commission's Rail Crossings Engineering Branch (RCEB) is in receipt of the *Notice of Determination (NOD)* for the proposed 12500 Firestone Boulevard Project. The City of Norwalk (City) is the lead agency and the project applicant.

The City proposes to redevelop the project site located at 12500 Firestone Boulevard, Norwalk, California, into a mixed-use development consisting of 120 residential units and a hotel with up to 130 guest rooms. The residential component will include 70 townhome units and 50 single-family units. The project site is located near the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) at-grade highway-rail crossing on Rosecrans Avenue (Crossing No. 001BK-499.80, DOT No. 748121S) and Bloomfield Avenue (Crossing No. 001BK-499.90, DOT No. 748122Y).

The approximately 7.7-acre project will include demolition of the existing Hotel Saddleback and development of 120 residential units and a new hotel. The residential component will consist of 70 townhome units and 50 single-family units on approximately 5.88 acres. The remaining approximately 1.81 acres will include a hotel with up to 130 guest rooms and 104 parking spaces. Project improvements will also include associated parking, circulation, landscaping, and site amenities.

This proposed development will likely increase both vehicular and pedestrian activity in the vicinity of the crossings and as such, RCEB recommends that the City review the existing conditions and implement any needed improvements to the crossing, either through a capital project led by the City or a condition of approval for the development, to bring it up to current standards and in compliance with ADA requirements. These would include, but not limited to, automatic pedestrian gates, tactile warning strips, and any required traffic signal operation modifications to allow for adequate timing for vehicles to clear the tracks upon a railroad preemption event.

In addition, fencing should be provided along Front St to deter the use of the railroad corridor as a shortcut across the railroad tracks. It is important to note that residential units of this project are served by Nettie L. Waite Middle School on the opposite side of the railroad corridor and the shortest path to/from the school is across the railroad corridor. It is human nature to take shortcuts where possible (even though illegal), so developments adjacent to railroads must be thoroughly vetted to deter any illegal and dangerous shortcuts through a railroad corridor. Any modifications to the crossing, including modification of the traffic signal operation or signal timing modifications, will need to be reviewed and authorized by the CPUC under CPUC's General Order (GO) 88-B.

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Any proposed crossing improvement project must also conform to the goals of the CPUC's Environmental and Social Justice Action Plan. This includes improving safety and access to transportation, improving local air quality and public health, and expanding outreach and public participation opportunities in disadvantaged communities. For more information, please visit https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/esjactionplan.

RCEB is available to discuss any potential safety impacts or concerns at this location and address any questions from the City.

If you have any questions, please contact Sally Nguyen at (213) 334-9366, or sally.nguyen@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Anh Truong, P.E.
Senior Utilities Engineer (Supervisor)
Rail Crossings Engineering Branch
Rail Safety Division

cc: State Clearinghouse, state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov
Kenneth Tom, Union Pacific Railroad, ktom@up.com
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