

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

300 Capitol Mall, Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95814



February 6, 2025

ENVR 2025070964

Tia Klumpp
City of Auburn
1225 Lincoln Way
Auburn, CA 95603

Re: Auburn Station Infill Project [SCH# 2025070964](#) — *Draft Environmental Impact Report*

Dear Tia Klumpp,

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 (*Draft EIR*) *Environmental Impact Report* for the proposed Auburn Station Infill Project. The City of Auburn (City) is the lead agency.

A development is proposed at 175 Fulweiler Avenue, on a site opposite the Robert F. Conheim Auburn Train station at 277 Nevada Street. This 10.5-acre, mixed-use, infill development site is proposed to accommodate between 200 and 350 dwelling units, an outdoor plaza, a community building, retail or commercial facilities, and new office space for Placer County operations. Improvements to pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular circulation are also proposed.

On August 5, 2025, the CPUC responded to the Auburn Station Infill Project *Notice of Preparation* to recommend the Project address potential impact to the nearby Blocker Drive at-grade highway-railroad crossing (CPUC# 001AI-124.20, DOT# 753211B.) The *Draft Environmental Impact Report* does not address our previous comments, nor does it make mention of this railroad crossing.

Blocker Drive crosses the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) Roseville Subdivision tracks approximately 600 feet south of the intersection of Blocker Drive, Fulweiler Avenue, and Nevada Street, which borders the Auburn Station Infill Project. Given the proposed addition of new community, commercial, residential, retail, and office facilities, pedestrian and vehicular activity in the vicinity of this crossing and track can be expected to increase.

Per *Draft EIR* page 2-5, table 2-1, the project proposes 1.23 parking spaces for each residence. Nearby, an existing public parking lot with approximately 100 spaces borders the Blocker Drive highway-railroad crossing, at 10901 Blocker Drive. Regular use of this public parking lot by households owning more than one car could lead to increased vehicle and pedestrian traffic over the Blocker Drive highway-railroad crossing.

Page 3.g-3 of the *Draft EIR* states "*freight activity in the vicinity is generally limited in frequency, and does not generate substantial local traffic of access constraints.*" However, in their most recent (September 8, 2025) update to the Federal Railroad Administration, UPRR, the owner of the tracks, estimated movements

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of 15 freight trains per day over the Blocker Drive highway-railroad crossing¹. An increase in vehicle and pedestrian traffic over this regularly utilized crossing should be thoroughly evaluated for potential safety impact to the crossing, its vicinity, and nearby intersections.

RCEB recommends installing fencing between the public parking lot and the railroad right-of-way. The project team should also investigate the impact of increased vehicular and pedestrian traffic on the Blocker Drive highway-railroad crossing and any necessary supplemental measures to mitigate this increase, such as but not limited to vehicle-channelizing median curbs, off-quadrant railroad warning devices, automatic pedestrian gates, and interconnection with the traffic signal equipment controlling the intersection of Blocker Drive, Fulweiler Avenue, and Nevada Street. This can be accomplished through a capital project funded by the City or developer and should also bring the crossing up to current standards and ensure compliance with ADA requirements.

Any proposed crossing improvement project will require authorization from the CPUC and 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 staff are available to discuss any potential safety impacts or concerns at the crossing and to address any questions from the City.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (916) 268-8050, or at jordan.peterson@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Jordan S. Peterson
Utilities Engineer
Rail Crossings Engineering Branch
Rail Safety Division

cc: State Clearinghouse, state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov
Amber Stoffels, Union Pacific Railroad, amber.stoffels@up.com

¹ Form FRA F 6180.71, U.S. DOT Crossing Inventory Form, DOT# 753211B
<https://safetydata.fra.dot.gov/OfficeofSafety/publicsite/Crossing/Report.aspx?phasetype=C&rptype=I&txtcrossingnum=753211B>