

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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



September 28, 2022

CORS 2022090008

Megan Taggart
City of Palmdale
38250 Sierra Highway
Palmdale, CA 93550

Re: Site Plan Review 22-012
SCH 2022080663 — *Notice of Preparation*



Dear Megan Taggart:

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 Preparation (NOP)* for the proposed Site Plan Review 22-012. The City of Palmdale, as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Palmdale 8th Street project (Project).

The subject site comprises a vacant approximately 18-acre property located south of Rancho Vista Boulevard between Sierra Highway and 8th Street East (Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 3022-001-027) in the City of Palmdale, CA. The General Plan designation of the site is anticipated to change from M-2 (General Industrial) to IND as part of the City's General Plan Update. This designation is intended for a variety of heavy industrial uses, including manufacturing and assembly of products and goods, warehousing, distribution, and similar uses. The Project Applicant proposes to develop the property with one 384,800 square foot industrial building with dock doors facing north and south. The future building user/tenant is unknown at this time. Associated site improvements would include parking areas, drive aisles, landscaping, lighting, and signage.

The project is located near the 8th Street East crossing (CPUC No. 001B-412.53-C, DOT No. 750605F) of the Union Pacific Mojave Subdivision. The crossing is equipped with Commission Standard 8 (flashing light signal assembly) warning devices. The railroad reported No Train Traffic on the most current USDOT Crossing Inventory Form. The warning device signal heads have been turned from view to indicate that they are not in operation, and TRACKS OUT OF SERVICE (R8-9) signs are installed on the masts.

The Proposed Site Plan indicates that a nearby driveway is planned near the track. Traffic impact studies in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) should analyze rail crossing safety and potential mitigation measures. CPUC has concerns about southbound vehicles queuing onto the track while entering the facility, and any turn movements out of the north driveway near the track. CPUC requests to be notified if rail service resumes at the 8th Street East crossing. Improvements to the crossing may be required to address concerns of traffic conflicts due to the new development and any train movements.

In addition to traffic at the adjacent crossing, the City should study the traffic impact on the nearby Avenue P / Rancho Vista Boulevard crossing (CPUC No. 001B-412.20, 101VY-69.95; DOT 750643P). On September 5, 2018, CPUC staff met with representatives from City of Palmdale, Caltrans, Metrolink, and UPRR for a diagnostic meeting to discuss safety improvements to the Avenue P crossing. The City of Palmdale is the lead agency for this crossing improvement project and is actively in preliminary engineering design for these improvements.

Lastly, the project abuts the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) Right-of-Way (ROW) on the northern and western edge of the property. The UPRR ROW on the western edge is an active mainline that sees heavy freight train

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traffic, as well as passenger train service from Metrolink trains. The UPRR ROW on the northern edge is currently an inactive spur line. The project will need to provide a physical barrier (i.e. fence or block wall) to prevent access onto UPRR ROW from the proposed development.

Construction or modification of public crossings requires authorization from the Commission. RCEB representatives are available to discuss any potential safety impacts or concerns at crossings. Please continue to keep RCEB informed of the project's development. More information can be found at: <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/crossings>.

If you have any questions, please contact Chris Palas at (213) 999-3403, or cpp@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Matt Cervantes, PE
Senior Utilities Engineer - Specialist
Rail Crossings Engineering Branch
Rail Safety Division

CC: State Clearinghouse, state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov
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