

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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



January 23, 2025

ENVR 20250100006

Julia Pujo
Environmental Analyst
City of Santa Barbara Planning Division
P.O. Box 1990
Santa Barbara, CA 93102-1990

Re: 101 Garden Street, [SCH 2024120648](#) – *Notice of Exemption*

Dear Julia Pujo:

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 Exemption (NOE)* for the proposed 101 Garden Street project. The City of Santa Barbara (City) is the lead agency.

The Project Applicant proposes to merge six adjacent lots, remove all existing structures, and construct a new 178,919-square-foot hotel containing 250 rooms and six affordable housing units (5 low-income studios and 1 moderate-income two-bedroom unit), along with an 85,298-square-foot subterranean parking garage on a 4.53-acre site at the southwest corner of Garden and E. Yanonali Streets. The project is located northwest of the Garden Street at-grade highway rail crossing (CPUC No. 001E-367.77, DOT No. 411769M).

West Beach and Stearns Wharf are just walking distance southwest of this crossing, along with many businesses, restaurants, and recreational facilities south of the crossing. With the adjacent parcels north of the crossings being developed with residential dwellings and within walking distance of the West Beach area, it would be expected that the pedestrian activity at this crossing will increase significantly. As such, RCEB recommends that the City improves the Garden Street crossing to accommodate the future increase in pedestrian activity at the crossing, either through a capital project led by the City or a condition of approval for the development adjacent to the crossing. In addition, a careful review of the vehicular traffic volumes should be analyzed and, if needed, mitigated to ensure that vehicles do not queue over the crossing.

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

If you have any questions, please contact Oliver Garcia at (213) 369-4674, or oliver.garcia@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Anh Truong
Senior Utilities Engineer (Supervisor)
Rail Crossings Engineering Branch
Rail Safety Division

CC: State Clearinghouse,
Kenneth Tom, UPRR, ktom@up.com