STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Jerry Brown, *Governor*

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298

January 4, 2011

John A. Swiecki
Principal Planner
City of Brisbane
50 Park Place
Brisbane, CA 94005

Re: Notice of Preparation, Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)
Brisbane Bylands Phase 1 Specific Plan (Case SP-1-06)
SCH# 200622136

Dear Mr. Swiecki:

As the state agency responsible for rail safety within California, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC or Commission) recommends that development projects proposed near rail corridors be planned with the safety of these corridors in mind. New developments and improvements to existing facilities may increase vehicular traffic volumes, not only on streets and at intersections, but also at at-grade highway-rail crossings. In addition, projects may increase pedestrian traffic at crossings, and elsewhere along rail corridor rights-of-way. Working with CPUC staff early in project planning will help project proponents, agency staff, and other reviewers to identify potential project impacts and appropriate mitigation measures, and thereby improve the safety of motorists, pedestrians, railroad personnel, and railroad passengers.

The project applicant proposes approximately 7 million sf of office/retail/industrial uses, 4,434 residential units and approximately 205 acres of upland open space/open area and related grading and infrastructure on approximately 684 acres. A Community Preferred Plan also will be evaluated in the forthcoming draft EIR at the level of detail as the applicant's proposal. The Community Preferred Plan proposes up to approximately 8 million sf of office/retail/industrial and 330 acres of open space.

The CPUC recommends the Traffic Impact Study (T.I.S) and the Transportation/Circulation section of the DEIR specifically evaluate traffic safety issues to the at-grade railroad crossings in the project area. In general, the major types of impacts to consider are collisions between trains and vehicles, and between trains and pedestrians.

Measures to reduce adverse impacts to rail safety need to be considered in the DEIR. General categories of such measures include:

- Installation of grade separations at crossings , i.e., physically separating roads and railroad track by constructing overpasses or underpasses
- Improvements to warning devices at existing highway-rail crossings

- Installation of additional warning devices
- Improvements to traffic signaling at intersections adjacent to crossings, e.g., traffic preemption
- Installation of median separation to prevent vehicles from driving around railroad crossing gates
- Prohibition of parking within 100 feet of crossings to improve the visibility of warning devices and approaching trains
- Installation of pedestrian-specific warning devices, channelization and sidewalks
- Construction of pill out lanes for buses and vehicles transporting hazardous materials
- Installation of vandal-resistant fencing or walls to limit the access of pedestrians onto the railroad right-of-way
- Elimination of driveways near crossings
- Increased enforcement of traffic laws at crossings
- Rail safety awareness programs to educate the public about the hazards of highway-rail grade crossings
- Commission approval is required to modify an existing highway-rail crossing or to construct a new crossing.

Please forward the traffic impact study *scope of services* from the traffic consultant when available so we can review the *assumptions/methodologies* and *thresholds of significance* and provide input early in the project. This will avoid future discrepancies on the traffic analysis for the at-grade railroad crossings and will expedite our review.

The Commission is a responsible agency under CEQA section 15381 with regard to this project. Commission approval is required to modify an existing highway-rail crossing or to construct a new crossing. As such, we greatly appreciate the opportunity to work with the City to improve public safety as it relates to the at-grade railroad crossings in the proposed project area.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. If you have any questions, please contact me at (415) 713-0092 or email at ms2@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Moses Stites

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