

September 10, 2026

Elizabeth Webster
Surface Transportation Board
Office of Environmental Analysis
395 E Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20423

**Re: Docket No. FD 36873, Union Pacific Railroad Company, Norfolk Southern Railway Company,
Preliminary Consultation Comments**

Dear Ms. Webster:

I am writing as a resident of Forest Park, Georgia to submit comments during the preliminary consultation period for the proposed acquisition of Norfolk Southern Railway Company by Union Pacific Railroad Company, Docket No. FD 36873. I respectfully ask that the Office of Environmental Analysis consider the following concerns as it prepares the scope of the Environmental Impact Statement.

Drinking Water Supply

Clayton County Water Authority is currently engaged in a remediation effort, estimated at approximately 450 million dollars over as long as five years, to address per and polyfluoroalkyl substances, commonly known as PFAS or forever chemicals, in the county's water supply. Federal testing data has shown Clayton County's PFAS levels at approximately 500% above the EPA's minimum reporting threshold, and independent analysis from the Environmental Working Group has found certain PFAS compounds present at levels thousands of times above the group's recommended health guideline. An increase in rail traffic carrying hazardous materials through Forest Park raises the risk that a derailment or spill could introduce additional contamination into a water system that is already under significant financial and operational strain. I ask that the Environmental Impact Statement include a specific analysis of the risk that increased hazardous material rail traffic poses to Clayton County's drinking water supply and infrastructure, including the potential cost of any additional remediation that would result from an incident.

Cumulative Noise Impact

Forest Park is also the proposed site of a large-scale data center development near Fort Gillem. Data center facilities of this scale typically operate cooling systems and backup generators on a continuous basis, producing sustained industrial noise. Forest Park sits immediately adjacent to Hartsfield Jackson Atlanta International Airport, so residents already contend with significant aircraft noise daily. An increase in average daily train traffic through the city would add a third, overlapping source of industrial noise for nearby residents. I ask that the Environmental Impact Statement evaluate the cumulative noise impact of increased rail operations together with the anticipated noise from nearby data center operations and existing airport activity, rather than evaluating rail noise in isolation, so that the analysis reflects the conditions residents will experience.

General Safety and Air Quality

An increase in average trains per day also raises the likelihood of additional hazardous material carloads moving through Forest Park and increases the potential for the transaction to exceed the Board's own thresholds for air quality and noise. I ask that the Environmental Impact Statement fully evaluate these risks and that any approval of the transaction include enforceable conditions to protect the health, safety, and quality of life of Forest Park residents and businesses.

Given the cumulative risk to our drinking water, the added noise burden on top of an already busy flight path, and the increased hazardous material traffic through our neighborhoods, *I do not support this increase in rail traffic through Forest Park, and I ask the Board to either deny the application or impose enforceable conditions that meaningfully limit these impacts.*

Thank you for considering these comments as part of the preliminary consultation process. I appreciate the Board's attention to the concerns of the Forest Park community.

Sincerely,

Melissa Fennell
Forest Park, Georgia