



South Coast Air Quality Management District

21865 Copley Drive, Diamond Bar, CA 91765-4178
(909) 396-2000 • www.aqmd.gov

SENT VIA E-MAIL AND USPS:

February 19, 2019

john.dacey@lacity.org

John Dacey, City Planner Associate
City of Los Angeles, Planning Department
200 N. Spring Street, 7th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Negative Declaration (ND) for the Proposed ENV-2017-2051: 1525 W. Colorado Blvd.

The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) staff appreciates the opportunity to comment on the above-mentioned document. The following comments are meant as guidance for the Lead Agency and should be incorporated into the Final ND.

SCAQMD Staff's Summary of Project Description

The Lead Agency proposes to demolish an existing 90-year old, one-story retail/auto repair structure approximately 2,254 square feet and construct a 10,379-square-foot building with six residential units, offices, and retail uses on 9,461.4 square feet (Proposed Project).

SCAQMD Staff's Summary and Comments on Air Quality Analysis

SCAQMD staff recommends that the Lead Agency provide substantial evidence in the Final ND to support a fair argument that the Proposed Project's construction and operational air quality impacts are less than significant. In the Air Quality Analysis of the ND, the Lead Agency stated that the Proposed Project's construction emissions from ROG, NO_x, CO, SO₂, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} would be less than significant "based on published studies for similar projects"¹. The Lead Agency also stated that "motor vehicles that access the project site would be the predominant source of long-term project operations emissions. Additional emissions would be generated by area sources, such as energy use and landscape maintenance activities. Therefore, the [P]roposed [P]roject would result in a less-than-significant impact related to regional operational emissions"².

The Lead Agency did not quantify the Proposed Project's construction (regional and localized) and operational emissions or include those emissions in the ND³ to support the less than significant findings. One of the basic purposes of CEQA is to inform government decision makers and the public about the potential, significant environmental effects of proposed activities (CEQA Guidelines Section 15002(a)(1)). A negative declaration is appropriate when the Lead Agency finds that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment (CEQA Guidelines Sections 15070 to 15075). Reasons to support this finding shall be documented in the initial study. Without quantifying emissions from construction and operational activities, the ND has not made that documentation which serves as substantial evidence to support a fair argument that the Proposed Project would not have any adverse effects on air quality. Therefore, SCAQMD staff recommends that the Lead Agency quantify and disclose the Proposed Project's air quality impacts in the Final ND. The following comments are meant

¹ ND, Page 16 of 35.

² *Ibid.*

³ Please note that no air quality technical study disclosing the Proposed Project's construction and operational emissions calculations was included with the ND that was circulated for public review and comments from February 14, 2019 to February 27, 2019.

as guidance to assist the Lead Agency's quantifications of the Proposed Project's construction and operational emissions in the Final ND.

Regional and Localized Air Quality Analysis during Construction

The Lead Agency should identify any potential adverse air quality impacts that could occur from all phases of the Proposed Project and all air pollutant sources related to the Proposed Project. Air quality impacts from both construction (including demolition, if any) and operations should be calculated. Construction-related air quality impacts typically include, but are not limited to, emissions from the use of heavy-duty equipment from grading, earth-loading/unloading, paving, architectural coatings, off-road mobile sources (e.g., heavy-duty construction equipment) and on-road mobile sources (e.g., construction worker vehicle trips, material transport trips). SCAQMD staff recommends that the Lead Agency quantify criteria pollutant emissions from construction activities and compare the results to SCAQMD's CEQA regional pollutant emissions significance thresholds to determine air quality impacts. Additionally, SCAQMD staff recommends that the Lead Agency quantify the Proposed Project's localized emissions and disclose the localized air quality impacts in the Final ND to ensure that any nearby sensitive receptors are not adversely affected by the construction activities that are occurring in close proximity. SCAQMD guidance for performing a localized air quality analysis is available on SCAQMD website⁴.

Operational Air Quality Analysis

The Lead Agency should identify any potential adverse air quality impacts from operation of the Proposed Project. Operation-related air quality impacts may include, but are not limited to, emissions from stationary sources (e.g., boilers), area sources (e.g., solvents and coatings), and vehicular trips (e.g., on- and off-road tailpipe emissions and entrained dust). Air quality impacts from indirect sources, such as sources that generate or attract vehicular trips, should be included in the analysis. In the event that operation of the Proposed Project generates or attracts vehicular trips, especially heavy-duty diesel-fueled vehicles, it is recommended that the Lead Agency perform a mobile source health risk assessment⁵. An analysis of all toxic air contaminant impacts due to the use of equipment potentially generating such air pollutants should also be included.

California Emission Estimator Model (CalEEMod)

SCAQMD staff recommends that the Lead Agency estimate the Proposed Project's short- and long-term air quality impacts using the current version of California Emission Estimator Model (CalEEMod)⁵. This software is free of charge and incorporates up-to-date state and locally approved emission factors and methodologies for estimating pollutant emissions from typical land use development. CalEEMod is the only software model maintained by the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) and replaces the now outdated URBEMIS. The Proposed Project's emissions can also be estimated by following the calculation methodologies in Chapter 9 and the Appendix to Chapter 9 in the South Coast SCAQMD's CEQA Air Quality Handbook⁶.

Mitigation Measures

In the event that the Lead Agency finds, after revisions to the Air Quality Analysis, that construction or operational emissions would exceed SCAQMD's air quality CEQA daily significance thresholds, feasible mitigation measures to minimize these impacts are required. Several resources are available to assist the Lead Agency with identifying potential mitigation measures for the Proposed Project, including:

- Chapter 11 of SCAQMD's CEQA Air Quality Handbook.

⁴ South Coast Air Quality Management District. Localized Significance Thresholds. Accessed at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/regulations/ceqa/air-quality-analysis-handbook/localized-significance-thresholds>.

⁵ South Coast Air Quality Management District. CalEEMOD (version 2016.3.2). Accessed at: <http://caleemod.com/>.

⁶ South Coast Air Quality Management District. Air Quality Analysis Guidance Handbook. Accessed at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/regulations/ceqa/air-quality-analysis-handbook>.

- SCAQMD's CEQA web pages available here: <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/regulations/ceqa/air-quality-analysis-handbook/mitigation-measures-and-control-efficiencies>.
- SCAQMD's Rule 403 – Fugitive Dust, and the Implementation Handbook for controlling construction-related emissions.
- SCAQMD's Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP) for the 2016 Air Quality Management Plan (2016 AQMP) available here (starting on page 86): <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/Agendas/Governing-Board/2017/2017-mar3-035.pdf>.
- CAPCOA's *Quantifying Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Measures* available here: <http://www.capcoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/CAPCOA-Quantification-Report-9-14-Final.pdf>.

Compliance with SCAQMD Rules

Since the Proposed Project would include demolition of a 90-year old structure⁷, asbestos may be encountered during demolition. As such, SCAQMD staff recommends that the Lead Agency include a discussion to demonstrate compliance with SCAQMD Rule 1403, *Asbestos Emissions from Demolition/Renovation Activities*⁸, in the Air Quality Section of the Final ND.

Since the structure proposed for demolition is used for auto repair, it is recommended that the Lead Agency consult with SCAQMD's Engineering and Permitting staff to determine if any change such as termination or modification to an existing permit from SCAQMD is required, and if compliance with other applicable SCAQMD rules is required and should be discussed in the Air Quality Section of the Final ND. Questions on permits and applicable SCAQMD rules can be directed to SCAQMD's Engineering and Permitting staff at (909) 396-3385. For more general information on permits, please visit SCAQMD's webpage at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/permits>.

Other Comment

The Lead Agency published the ND for public review and comments on February 14, 2019. On the publication of environmental notices for the Proposed Project in Los Angeles Times, it states that the public review and comment period ends February 27, 2019. Therefore, the public review period for the Proposed Project is approximately 13 days that begins February 14, 2019 and ends February 27, 2019. This is less than 20 days required under CEQA Guidelines Sections 15105 and 15073. Therefore, SCAQMD staff recommends that the Lead Agency correct the notice and extend the public review period to ensure a full, 20-day public review period, at a minimum, for the Proposed Project.

Conclusion

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15074, prior to approving the Proposed Project, the Lead Agency shall consider the ND for adoption together with any comments received during the public review process. Please provide the SCAQMD with written responses to all comments contained herein prior to the adoption of the Final ND. When responding to issues raised in the comments, response should provide sufficient details giving reasons why specific comments and suggestions are not accepted. There should be good faith, reasoned analysis in response. Conclusory statements unsupported by factual information do not facilitate the purpose and goal of CEQA on public disclosure and are not meaningful, informative, or useful to decision makers and the public who are interested in the Proposed Project.

⁷ ND, Page 1.

⁸ South Coast Air Quality Management District. Rule 1403. Accessed at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/reg-xiv/rule-1403.pdf>.

SCAQMD staff is available to work with the Lead Agency to address these issues and any other questions that may arise. Please contact me at lsun@aqmd.gov if you have any questions regarding the enclosed comments.

Sincerely,

Lijin Sun

Lijin Sun, J.D.

Program Supervisor, CEQA IGR

Planning, Rule Development & Area Sources

LS

LAC190215-02
Control Number