



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:

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Ctaylor@beaumontca.gov

Christina Taylor, Community Development Director
Planning Department
City of Beaumont
550 East 6th Street
Beaumont, CA 92223

Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Proposed Oak Valley Express Project

South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD) 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 MND.

South Coast AQMD Staff's Summary of Project Description

The Lead Agency proposes to construct a 3,500-square-foot convenience store, a 6,250-square-foot retail building, a 2,000-square-foot restaurant, and a gasoline service station with eight pumps on 2.3 acres (Proposed Project). The Proposed Project is located on the southwest corner of Golf Club Drive and Oak Valley Parkway within the City of Beaumont. Construction is anticipated to begin in December 2019, and the Proposed Project will be operational by January 2020¹. Upon review of the MND and aerial photographs, sensitive receptors are within 134 feet of the Proposed Project² and with 351 feet of the proposed gasoline service station pumps³.

Permits and Compliance with South Coast AQMD Rules

Since the Proposed Project includes the operation of a gasoline service station with eight pumps, a permit from South Coast AQMD will be required, and South Coast AQMD should be identified as a Responsible Agency under CEQA for the Proposed Project in the Final MND. Should there be any questions on permits, please contact South Coast AQMD's Engineering and Permitting staff at (909) 396-3385. For more general information on permits, please visit South Coast AQMD's webpage at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/permits>. In addition to a discussion⁴ on Rule 461 – Gasoline Transfer and Dispensing⁵, the Final MND should also include a discussion of compliance with applicable South Coast AQMD Rules, including, but not limited to, Rule 201 – Permit to Construct⁶, Rule 203 – Permit to Operate⁷, and Rule 1401 – New Source Review of Toxic Air Contaminants⁸. Any assumptions used in the Air Quality and Health Risk Assessment (HRA) analyses in the Final MND will be used as the basis for permit conditions and limits. The 2015 revised Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment

¹ MND. Section 2.0 Project Description. Page 2-7.

² *Ibid.* Section 4.3 Air Quality. Page 4-16.

³ *Ibid.* Page 4-20.

⁴ *Ibid.* Page 4-10.

⁵ South Coast AQMD. Rule 461 – Gasoline Transfer and Dispensing. Accessed at: <https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/compliance/Gas-Dispensing/rule-461.pdf>.

⁶ South Coast AQMD. Rule 201 – Permit to Construct. Accessed at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/reg-ii/rule-201.pdf>.

⁷ South Coast AQMD. Rule 203 – Permit to Operate. Accessed at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/reg-ii/rule-203.pdf>.

⁸ South Coast AQMD. Rule 1401 – New Source Review of Toxic Air Contaminants. Accessed at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/reg-xiv/rule-1401.pdf>.

(OEHHA) methodology⁹ is being used by South Coast AQMD for determining operational health impacts for permitting applications and also for all CEQA projects where South Coast AQMD is the Lead Agency. If there is any information in the permitting process suggesting that the Proposed Project would result in significant adverse air quality impacts not analyzed in the Final MND or substantially more severe air quality impacts than those analyzed in the Final MND, the Lead Agency should commit to reevaluating the Proposed Project's air quality and health risks impacts through a CEQA process (CEQA Guidelines Section 15162).

South Coast AQMD Staff's Summary of the Air Quality Analysis

In the Air Quality Analysis Section, the Lead Agency quantified the Proposed Project's construction and operational emissions and compared those emissions to South Coast AQMD's recommended regional and localized air quality CEQA significance thresholds. Based on the analyses, the Lead Agency found that the Proposed Project's regional operational NO_x emissions would be primarily contributed by mobile sources from patrons and would be 53.7 pounds/day (lbs/day)¹⁰, which is slightly below South Coast AQMD's air quality CEQA significance threshold for operational NO_x emissions at 55 lbs/day¹¹. The Lead Agency found that all other regional and localized air quality impacts would be less than significant¹². Additionally, the Lead Agency prepared a Health Risk Assessment (HRA)¹³ and found that operation of the Proposed Project would result in a cancer risk of 1.72 in one million at the maximum impacted sensitive receptor¹⁴, which would not exceed South Coast AQMD's CEQA significance threshold of 10 in one million for cancer risk¹⁵. However, it did not appear that the Air Quality Analysis included operational ROG emissions generated from storage tanks and the fueling process during operation. This may have likely led to an underestimation of the Proposed Project's operational air quality impacts. Please see the attachment for more information. The attachment also includes a list of potential mitigation measures as resources to further reduce the Proposed Project's operational NO_x emissions, which the Lead Agency should consider and incorporate in the Final MND.

Conclusion

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15074, prior to approving the Proposed Project, the Lead Agency shall consider the MND for adoption together with any comments received during the public review process. Please provide South Coast AQMD with written responses to all comments contained herein prior to the adoption of the Final MND. When responding to issues raised in the comments, responses 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. Further, if the Lead Agency makes a finding that additional recommended mitigation measures are not feasible, the Lead Agency should describe the specific reasons for rejecting or substituting these mitigation measures in the Final MND (CEQA Guidelines Section 15074.1).

⁹ Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment. "Notice of Adoption of Air Toxics Hot Spots Program Guidance Manual for the Preparation of Health Risk Assessments 2015". Accessed at: <https://oehha.ca.gov/air/crn/notice-adoption-air-toxics-hot-spots-program-guidance-manual-preparation-health-risk-0>.

¹⁰ MND. Section 4.3 Air Quality, Page 4-14.

¹¹ South Coast AQMD CEQA Air Quality Significance Thresholds. Accessed at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/scaqmd-air-quality-significance-thresholds.pdf>

¹² MND. Section 4.3 Air Quality, Pages 4-7 through 4-23.

¹³ South Coast AQMD. Risk Assessment Procedures for Rules 1401. Accessed at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/permits/risk-assessment>.

¹⁴ MND. Section 4.3 Air Quality, Pages 4-20.

¹⁵ South Coast AQMD has developed the CEQA significance threshold of 10 in one million for cancer risk. When South Coast AQMD acts as the Lead Agency, South Coast AQMD staff conducts a HRA, compares the maximum cancer risk to the threshold of 10 in one million to determine the level of significance for health risk impacts, and identifies mitigation measures if the risk is found to be significant.

South Coast AQMD staff is available to work with the Lead Agency to address any air quality questions that may arise from this comment letter. Please contact Alina Mullins, Assistant Air Quality Specialist, at amullins@aqmd.gov or (909) 396-2402, should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Lijin Sun

Lijin Sun, J.D.

Program Supervisor, CEQA IGR

Planning, Rule Development & Area Sources

Attachment

LS:AM

RVC190507-10

Control Number

ATTACHMENT

Air Quality Analysis – Operational Emissions

1. Upon review of the Air Quality Analysis, it did not appear that the analysis included operational ROG emissions generated from storage tanks or from the fueling process during operation. This may have likely led to an under-estimation of the Proposed Project's operational air quality impacts. Although South Coast AQMD Rule 461 – Gasoline Transfer and Dispensing requires the use of California Air Resources Board certified Phase I and Phase II enhanced vapor recovery systems with minimum volumetric efficiencies of 98% and 95%, respectively¹⁶, ROG emissions are not entirely eliminated from the fueling process and should be included when quantifying the Proposed Project's operational emissions. As an informational document, the Final MND should, at a minimum, include a discussion on potential operational air quality impacts from the fueling process. The Lead Agency should use its best efforts to quantify and disclose ROG emissions from the fueling process in the Final MND. If there is no substantial evidence to support a quantitative analysis of ROG emissions from the fueling process, the Lead Agency should disclose the reasons supported by factual information in the Final MND. It is also important to note that while CalEEMod¹⁷ quantifies mobile source emissions (e.g., trip visits by patrons) associated with operating a gasoline service station, CalEEMod does not quantify the operational stationary source emissions from the storage tanks and fueling equipment.

Additional Recommended Mitigation Measures

2. CEQA requires that all feasible mitigation measures that go beyond what is required by law be utilized to minimize or eliminate any significant adverse air quality impacts. To further reduce the Proposed Project's NOx emissions, South Coast AQMD staff has compiled a list of recommended mitigation measures as suggested resources and guidance to the Lead Agency to assist in the identification of feasible mitigation measures for incorporation in the Final MND. For more information on potential mitigation measures as guidance to the Lead Agency, please visit South Coast AQMD's CEQA Air Quality Handbook website¹⁸.

Mitigation Measures for Operational Air Quality Impacts from Mobile Sources

- Provide incentives for vendors and material delivery trucks that would be visiting the retail and restaurant uses to encourage the use of zero-emission or near-zero emission heavy-duty trucks during operation, such as trucks with natural gas engines that meet CARB's adopted optional NOx emissions standard of 0.02 grams per brake horsepower-hour (g/bhp-hr). At a minimum, incentivize the use of 2010 model year¹⁹ or newer engines that meet CARB's 2010 engine emission standards of 0.01 g/bhp-hr for particulate matter (PM) and 0.20 g/bhp-hr of NOx emissions or newer, cleaner trucks. Include analyses to evaluate and identify sufficient power available for zero emission trucks and supportive infrastructures in the Energy and Utilities and Service Systems Sections of the Final MND, where appropriate.

¹⁶ South Coast AQMD. Rule 461 – Gasoline Transfer and Dispensing. Accessed at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/rule-iv/rule-461.pdf>.

¹⁷ CalEEMod 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 is available free of charge at: www.caleemod.com.

¹⁸ South Coast Air Quality Management District. Accessed at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/regulations/ceqa/air-quality-analysis-handbook>.

¹⁹ CARB adopted the statewide On-Road Truck and Bus Regulation in 2010. The Regulation requires diesel trucks and buses that operate in California to be upgraded to reduce emissions. Newer heavier trucks and buses must meet particulate matter filter requirements beginning January 1, 2012. Lighter and older heavier trucks must be replaced starting January 1, 2015. By January 1, 2023, nearly all trucks and buses will need to have 2010 model year engines or equivalent. More information on the CARB's Truck and Bus Regulations is available here: <https://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/onrdiesel/onrdiesel.htm>.

- Provide electric vehicle (EV) charging stations for the retail and restaurant uses. Require at least 5% of all vehicle parking spaces include EV charging stations, or at a minimum, require the Proposed Project to be constructed with the appropriate infrastructure to facilitate sufficient electric charging for passenger vehicles and trucks to plug-in. Electrical hookups should be provided at the onsite truck stop for truckers to plug in any onboard auxiliary equipment. Electrical panels should be appropriately sized to allow for future expanded use. The Lead Agency should also include analyses to evaluate and identify sufficient power available for zero emission trucks and supportive infrastructures (e.g., EV charging stations) in the Energy and Utilities and Service Systems Sections of the Final MND, where appropriate.
- Provide incentives for employees working at the proposed retail and restaurant uses to encourage the use of public transportation or carpooling, such as discounted transit passes or carpool rebates.
- Implement a rideshare program for employees working at the proposed retail and restaurant uses and set a goal to achieve a certain participation rate over a period of time.

Mitigation Measures for Operational Air Quality Impacts from Area Sources

- Maximize the use of solar energy including solar panels. Installing the maximum possible number of solar energy arrays on the building roofs and/or on the Proposed Project site to generate solar energy for the facility and/or EV charging stations.
- Require the use of electric landscaping equipment, such as lawn mowers and leaf blowers.
- Require use of electric or alternatively fueled sweepers with HEPA filters.
- Maximize the planting of trees in landscaping and parking lots.
- Use light colored paving and roofing materials.
- Utilize only Energy Star heating, cooling, and lighting devices, and appliances.