



# 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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[darlene.navarrete@lacity.org](mailto:darlene.navarrete@lacity.org)

[jordann.turner@lacity.org](mailto:jordann.turner@lacity.org)

Jordann Turner, City Planner  
Los Angeles City Hall – Department of City Planning  
200 N. Spring Street, Room 750  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

## **Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Proposed 11331 W Osborne St; Sunland-Tujunga-Lake View Terrace (ENV-2016-2858)**

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

### Project Description

The Lead Agency proposes to construct a new eight-pump gas station with a 2,940-square-foot convenience store and additional 12 parking spaces. The project is surrounded by multi-family and single-family residential uses.

### Compliance with SCAQMD Rules

Since the proposed project is a gasoline service and dispensing facility, a permit from SCAQMD would be required, and SCAQMD should be identified as a responsible agency under CEQA for this project. The Final MND should also demonstrate compliance with SCAQMD Rules, including, but are not limited to, Rule 201 – Permit to Construct, Rule 203 – Permit to Operate, and Rule 461 – Gasoline Transfer and Dispensing. If there are permitting questions concerning the gasoline service station, they can be directed to Engineering and Permitting staff at (909) 396-2551.

### Air Quality Analysis

Based on a review of the air quality analysis in the MND, the SCAQMD staff found that the Lead Agency did not quantify the project's air quality emissions during both construction and operation. One of the basic purposes of CEQA is to inform governmental decision makers and the public about the potential, significant environmental effects of proposed activities (CEQA Guidelines Section 15002(a)(1)). A mitigated negative declaration is appropriate when the Lead Agency finds that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment after incorporating mitigation measures (CEQA Guidelines Sections 15070 to 15075). Reasons to support this finding shall be documented in the initial study. Without quantifying the project's air emissions, the MND has not made that documentation which serves as substantial evidence to support a fair argument that the project would not have any adverse effects on air quality. Therefore, the SCAQMD staff recommends that the Lead Agency calculate construction and operational emissions and include them in the Final MND.

The SCAQMD adopted its California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Air Quality Handbook in 1993 to assist other public agencies with the preparation of air quality analyses. The SCAQMD staff recommends that the Lead Agency use this Handbook as guidance to prepare an air quality analysis in the Final MND. Copies of the Handbook are available from the SCAQMD's Subscription Services

Department by calling (909) 396-3720. More recent guidance developed since this Handbook was published is also available on SCAQMD's website here: [www.aqmd.gov/ceqa/hdbk.html](http://www.aqmd.gov/ceqa/hdbk.html). SCAQMD staff also recommends that the Lead Agency use the CalEEMod land use emissions software. This software has recently been updated to incorporate 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](http://www.caleemod.com).

Based on a review of aerial map, the SCAQMD staff found that the proposed project would be sited near existing sensitive land uses (i.e., residential dwellings to the northeast, southeast, and southwest). However, the MND did not evaluate potential localized air quality impacts that could result from construction or operation of the proposed project. Therefore, the SCAQMD staff recommends that the Lead Agency revise the air quality analysis to include an assessment of potential localized air quality impacts during the construction of the proposed project. These potential air quality impacts should be assessed using SCAQMD's Localized Significance Methodology and compared to the localized significance thresholds specific to the project area<sup>1</sup>. Furthermore, the Lead Agency should ensure that all future projects include a localized air quality analysis if warranted. In the event that the Lead Agency determines the proposed project will result in significant localized construction air quality impacts, the SCAQMD staff recommends that the Lead Agency require mitigation to minimize these impacts to a less than significant level. Additional construction-related air quality mitigation measures are available at: [http://www.aqmd.gov/ceqa/handbook/mitigation/MM\\_intro.html](http://www.aqmd.gov/ceqa/handbook/mitigation/MM_intro.html)

### Health Risk Assessment

The proposed project would be sited in close proximity to existing residential uses, and benzene, which is a toxic air contaminant, may be emitted from gasoline refueling operations. The SCAQMD staff is concerned about the potential health impacts on the residents from being exposed to benzene. As such, it is recommended that the Lead Agency evaluate, quantify, and perform a health risk assessment for the proposed project in the Final MND. Guidance for performing a gasoline dispensing station health risk assessment can be found in the SCAQMD's *Emission Inventory and Risk Assessment Guidelines for Gasoline Dispensing Stations*<sup>2</sup>.

### Guidance Regarding Gasoline Dispensing Facilities Sited Near Sensitive Receptors

SCAQMD staff recognizes that there are many factors Lead Agencies must consider when making local planning and land use decisions. To facilitate stronger collaboration between Lead Agencies and the SCAQMD to reduce community exposure to source-specific and cumulative air pollution impacts, the SCAQMD adopted the *Guidance Document for Addressing Air Quality Issues in General Plans and Local Planning*<sup>3</sup> in 2005. Additionally, the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Perspective*<sup>4</sup> recommended in 2005 to avoid the siting of housing within 300 feet of a large gas station or 50 feet for a typical gas station. In April 2017, CARB released a Technical Advisory as a supplement to this Handbook<sup>5</sup>. These Guidance documents provide suggested policies that local governments can use in their General Plans or through local planning to prevent or reduce potential air pollution impacts and protect public health. The SCAQMD staff recommends that the

<sup>1</sup> The Localized Significance Threshold (LST) methodology and Mass Rate LST Look Up Table  
Accessed at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/ceqa/handbook/LST/LST.html>

<sup>2</sup> South Coast Air Quality Management District. January 2007. "Emission Inventory and Risk Assessment Guidelines for Gasoline Dispensing Stations" Accessed at: [http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/planning/risk-assessment/gas\\_station\\_hra.pdf](http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/planning/risk-assessment/gas_station_hra.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> South Coast Air Quality Management District. May 2005. "Guidance Document for Addressing Air Quality Issues in General Plans and Local Planning" Accessed at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/library/documents-support-material/planning-guidance/guidance-document>

<sup>4</sup> California Air Resources Board. April 2005. "Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective."  
Accessed at: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/ch/landuse.htm>

<sup>5</sup> California Air Resources Board. April 2017. "Technical Advisory: Strategies to Reduce Air Pollution Exposure near High-Volume Roadways." Accessed at: <https://www.arb.ca.gov/ch/landuse.htm>

Lead Agency review and consider these Guidance documents when making local planning and land use decisions.

Pursuant to the 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. SCAQMD staff is available to work with the Lead Agency to address any air quality questions that may arise from this comment letter. Please contact Jack Cheng, Air Quality Specialist, CEQA IGR Section, at (909) 396-2448, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

*Lijin Sun*

Lijin Sun, J.D.  
Program Supervisor, CEQA IGR  
Planning, Rule Development & Area Sources

LS:JC  
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