



South Coast Air Quality Management District

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

SENT VIA E-MAIL:

January 10, 2025

jimmywong@santafesprings.org

Jimmy Wong, Associate Planner

Santa Fe Springs Community Development Department

11710 East Telegraph Road

Santa Fe Springs, California 90670

Notice of Availability of Draft Environmental Impact (EIR) Report for the Northwest Corner of Telegraph and Santa Fe Springs Project (Proposed Project) (SCH: 2024050495)

South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) staff appreciate the opportunity to review the above-mentioned document. The City of Santa Fe Springs is the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Lead Agency for the Proposed Project. To provide context, South Coast AQMD staff has provided a brief summary of the project information and prepared the following comments which are organized by topic of concern.

South Coast AQMD Staff's Summary of Project Information in the Draft EIR

Based on the Draft EIR, the project consists of subdividing an approximately 26.77-acre parcel into two parcels that would be approximately 13.45 acres and 13.09 acres. The project would consist of demolishing an existing building and other structures onsite, ceasing an existing oil well activity and abandoning the existing on-site oil wells to construct two new warehouse buildings. Building 1 would be approximately 298,373 square feet and Building 2 would be approximately 286,305 square feet. Additional improvements include two proposed underground on site infiltration trenches, parking, loading docks, decorative landscaping, associated on-site infrastructure, and construction of a cul-de-sac driveway.¹ Based on a review of aerial photographs, South Coast AQMD staff found that the nearest sensitive receptor (e.g., residential development) is located 357 feet south of the project site boundary.² Construction of the Proposed Project is anticipated to last approximately 18 months and is planned to begin the second quarter of 2025 and end the first quarter of 2027.³ The Proposed Project is located on the northwest corner of Santa Fe Springs Road and Telegraph Road (APN: 8005-015-05).⁴

South Coast AQMD Staff's Comments

Cumulative Impacts during Operation

Based on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR), the Proposed Project includes the construction of two buildings. Building 1 will encompass approximately 298,373 square feet,

¹ Draft EIR. Page 8.

² *Ibid.* Page 141.

³ *Ibid.* Page 284.

⁴ *Ibid.* Page 7.

while Building 2 will cover about 286,305 square feet. As illustrated in Figure 3-7: Conceptual Site Plan,⁵ the project site is bordered by approved adjacent developments to the east and south. Additionally, existing warehouses are located to the west and north of the project site. Per CEQA Guidelines Section 15065(a)(3), South Coast AQMD staff is primarily concerned with the cumulative air quality impacts from increased concentrations of air toxics in the region. Pursuant to CEQA, which requires an analysis of direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts, South Coast AQMD has initiated a public process to develop additional guidance for evaluating cumulative air quality impacts from increased concentrations of air toxics for projects. To date, there have been five working group meetings (WGMs) dedicated to proposed cumulative impact policy development. For more general information on the WGMs, please visit South Coast AQMD's webpage.⁶

Therefore, South Coast AQMD staff recommends that, at minimum, the Lead Agency perform a qualitative analysis to provide the potential cumulative impacts from air toxics in consideration by listing all surrounding past, present, and probable future projects. The Lead Agency may also perform a more detailed and robust quantitative analysis of cumulative air toxic and potential health risk implications to be included in the Final EIR.

Rule 2305: Warehouse Indirect Source Rule - Warehouse Actions and Investments To Reduce Emissions (WAIRE) Program

On May 7, 2021, South Coast AQMD's Governing Board adopted Rule 2305 – Warehouse Indirect Source Rule – Warehouse Actions and Investments to Reduce Emissions (WAIRE) Program, and Rule 316 – Fees for Rule 2305. Rules 2305 and 316 are new rules that will reduce regional and local emissions of nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and particulate matter (PM), including diesel PM. These emission reductions will reduce public health impacts for communities located near warehouses from mobile sources that are associated with warehouse activities. Also, the emission reductions will help the region attain federal and state ambient air quality standards. Rule 2305 applies to owners and operators of warehouses greater than or equal to 100,000 square feet. Under Rule 2305, operators are subject to an annual WAIRE Points Compliance Obligation that is calculated based on the annual number of truck trips to the warehouse. WAIRE Points can be earned by implementing actions in a prescribed menu in Rule 2305, implementing a site-specific custom plan, or paying a mitigation fee. Warehouse owners are only required to submit limited information reports, but they can opt in to earn Points on behalf of their tenants if they so choose because certain actions to reduce emissions may be better achieved at the warehouse development phase, for instance the installation of solar and charging infrastructure. Rule 316 is a companion fee rule for Rule 2305 to allow South Coast AQMD to recover costs associated with Rule 2305 compliance activities. Since the Proposed Project consists of the development of a 584,678 square foot warehouse, the Proposed Project's warehouse owners and operators will be required to comply with Rule 2305 once the warehouse is occupied. Therefore, South Coast AQMD staff recommends that the Lead Agency review South Coast AQMD Rule 2305 to determine the potential WAIRE Points Compliance Obligation for future operators and explore whether additional project requirements and CEQA mitigation measures can be identified and implemented at the Proposed

⁵ *Ibid.* Page 91.

⁶ South Coast AQMD's Cumulative Impacts from Air Toxics for CEQA Projects: [https://www.aqmd.gov/home/rules-compliance/ceqa/ceqa-policy-development-\(new\)](https://www.aqmd.gov/home/rules-compliance/ceqa/ceqa-policy-development-(new)).

Project that may help future warehouse operators meet their compliance obligation⁷. South Coast AQMD staff is available to answer questions concerning Rule 2305 implementation and compliance by phone or email at (909) 396-3140 or waire-program@aqmd.gov. For implementation guidance documents and compliance and reporting tools, please visit South Coast AQMD's WAIRE Program webpage.⁸

South Coast AQMD Air Permits and Role as a Responsible Agency

If implementation of the Proposed Project would require the use of new stationary and portable sources, including but not limited to emergency generators, fire water pumps, boilers, etc., air permits from South Coast AQMD will be required. The final CEQA document, whether a MND or EIR, should include a discussion about the potentially applicable rules that the Proposed Project needs to comply with. Those rules may include, for example, Rule 201 – Permit to Construct,⁹ Rule 203 – Permit to Operate,¹⁰ Rule 401 – Visible Emissions,¹¹ Rule 402 – Nuisance,¹² Rule 403 – Fugitive Dust,¹³ Rule 1110.2 – Emissions from Gaseous and Liquid Fueled Engines,¹⁴ Rule 1113 – Architectural Coating,¹⁵ Rule 1166 – VOC Contaminated Soil Excavation,¹⁶ Rule 1179 – Publicly Owned Treatment Works Operation,¹⁷ Regulation XIII – New Source Review,¹⁸ Rule 1401 – Air Toxics,¹⁹ Rule 1466 – Control of Particulate Emissions from Soils with Toxic Air Contaminants,²⁰ Rule 1470 – Requirements for Stationary Diesel Fueled Internal Combustion and Other Compression Ignition Engines,²¹ etc. It is important to note that when air permits from South Coast AQMD are required, the role of South Coast AQMD would change from a Commenting Agency to a Responsible Agency under CEQA. In addition, if South Coast AQMD is identified as a Responsible Agency, per CEQA Guidelines Sections 15086, the Lead Agency is required to consult with South Coast AQMD.

⁷ South Coast AQMD Rule 2305 – Warehouse Indirect Source Rule – Warehouse Actions and Investments to Reduce Emissions (WAIRE) Program. Accessed at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/reg-xxiii/r2305.pdf>.

⁸ South Coast AQMD WAIRE Program. Accessed at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/waire>.

⁹ South Coast AQMD. Rule 201 available at <https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/reg-ii/rule-201.pdf>

¹⁰ South Coast AQMD. Rule 203 available at <https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/reg-ii/rule-203.pdf>

¹¹ South Coast AQMD. Rule 401 available at <https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/rule-iv/rule-401.pdf>

¹² South Coast AQMD. Rule 402 available at <https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/rule-iv/rule-402.pdf>

¹³ South Coast AQMD. Rule 403 available at <https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/rule-iv/rule-403>

¹⁴ South Coast AQMD. Rule 1110.2 available at https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/reg-xi/r1110_2.pdf

¹⁵ South Coast AQMD. Rule 1113 available at <https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/reg-xi/r1113.pdf>

¹⁶ South Coast AQMD. Rule 1166 available at <https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/reg-xi/rule-1166.pdf>

¹⁷ South Coast AQMD. Rule 1179 available at <https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/reg-xi/rule-1179.pdf>

¹⁸ South Coast AQMD. Regulation XIII available at <https://www.aqmd.gov/home/rules-compliance/rules/scaqmd-rule-book/regulation-xiii>

¹⁹ South Coast AQMD. Rule 1401 available at <https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/reg-xiv/rule-1401.pdf>

²⁰ South Coast AQMD. Rule 1466 available <https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/reg-xiv/rule-1466.pdf>

²¹ South Coast AQMD. Rule 1470 available at <https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/rule-book/reg-xiv/rule-1470.pdf>

CEQA Guidelines Section 15096 sets forth specific procedures for a Responsible Agency, including making a decision on the adequacy of the CEQA document for use as part of the process for conducting a review of the Proposed Project and issuing discretionary approvals. Moreover, it is important to note that if a Responsible Agency determines that a CEQA document is not adequate to rely upon for its discretionary approvals, the Responsible Agency must take further actions listed in CEQA Guideline Section 15096(e), which could have the effect of delaying the implementation of the Proposed Project. In its role as CEQA Responsible Agency, the South Coast AQMD is obligated to ensure that the CEQA document prepared for this Proposed Project contains a sufficient project description and analysis to be relied upon in order to issue any discretionary approvals that may be needed for air permits. South Coast AQMD is concerned that the project description and analysis in its current form in the MND is inadequate to be relied upon for this purpose.

For these reasons, the final CEQA document should be revised to include a discussion about any and all new stationary and portable equipment requiring South Coast AQMD air permits, provide the evaluation of their air quality and greenhouse gas impacts, and identify South Coast AQMD as a Responsible Agency for the Proposed Project as this information will be relied upon as the basis for the permit conditions and emission limits for the air permit(s). Please contact South Coast AQMD's Engineering and Permitting staff at (909) 396-3385 for questions regarding what types of equipment would require air permits. For more general information on permits, please visit South Coast AQMD's webpage at <https://www.aqmd.gov/home/permits>.

Conclusion

As set forth in California Public Resources Code Section 21092.5(a) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a-b), the Lead Agency shall evaluate comments from public agencies on the environmental issues and prepare a written response at least 10 days prior to certifying the Final EIR. As such, please provide South Coast AQMD written responses to all comments contained herein at least 10 days prior to the certification of the Final EIR. In addition, as provided by CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(c), if the Lead Agency's position is at variance with recommendations provided in this comment letter, detailed reasons supported by substantial evidence in the record to explain why specific comments and suggestions are not accepted must be provided.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. 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 Sahar Ghadimi, Air Quality Specialist, at sghadimi@aqmd.gov should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Sam Wang

Sam Wang

Program Supervisor, CEQA IGR

Planning, Rule Development & Implementation

SW:SG

LAC241204-02

Control Number