



South Coast Air Quality Management District

21865 Copley Drive, Diamond Bar, CA 91765-4182
(909) 396-2000 • www.aqmd.gov

E-mailed: March 19, 2010

March 19, 2010

Mr. Matt Straite
Riverside County Planning Department
4080 Lemon Street, 9th Floor
P.O. Box 1409
Riverside, CA 92502-1409

Review of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) for the Travertine Point Specific Plan

The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the above-mentioned document. The following comment is intended to provide guidance to the lead agency and should be incorporated into the revised Draft or Final Environmental Impact Report (Draft or Final EIR) as appropriate.

The SCAQMD staff appreciates that the lead agency reviewed the California Air Resources Board's Air Quality Land Use Handbook: A Community Perspective (CARB Handbook), that addresses siting incompatible land uses and "sensitive land uses" (e.g., residences, parks and medical facilities) near industrial sources, high traffic freeways and roads to design the proposed project. Specifically, the lead agency proposed Mitigation Measures 6.3-9 through 6.3-11 to minimize potentially significant health risks to sensitive receptors. However, in addition to the above mentioned mitigation measures the SCAQMD requests that the lead agency reduce future potential project related health impacts by adhering to all applicable advisory recommendations for sensitive land uses provided in the CARB Handbook.

Also, the lead agency concluded that the proposed project would result in significant regional construction and operational air quality impacts. However, SCAQMD staff is concerned that the lead agency's methodology for analyzing construction related emissions may underestimate the significance of the project's air quality impacts. Therefore, to further minimize regional and any potential localized construction air quality impacts from the proposed project SCAQMD staff has recommended additional construction related air quality mitigation measures.

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21092.5, please provide the SCAQMD with written responses to all comments contained herein prior to the adoption of the Final EIR. Further, staff is available to work with the lead agency to address these issues and any other questions that may arise. Please contact Dan Garcia, Air Quality Specialist CEQA Section, at (909) 396-3304, if you have any questions regarding the enclosed comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian V. MacMillan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'I' and 'M'.

Ian MacMillan

Program Supervisor, CEQA Inter-Governmental Review
Planning, Rule Development & Area Sources

Attachment

IM:DG

RVC100119-01
Control Number

Siting Criteria and Future Project Planning

1. The SCAQMD appreciates that the lead agency has reviewed the CARB Handbook, and that the lead agency acknowledges the guidance offered by the handbook related to siting incompatible land uses and “sensitive land uses” (e.g., residences, school, parks and medical facilities) near industrial sources, high traffic freeways and roads. Specifically, the lead agency states that State Route-86S (SR-86s) is adjacent to the proposed project and has an estimated future average daily trip (ADT) value of 111,500 in the project vicinity, including a potentially significant fraction of heavy duty diesel commercial truck. As a result, the lead agency incorporated Mitigation Measures 6.3-9 through 6.3-11 to address CARB’s recommended buffer distances between incompatible land uses, however, the lead agency did not quantify the effectiveness of these mitigation measures.

Given the projected high ADT value for SR-86S and that the lead agency did not quantify the effectiveness of Mitigation Measures 6.3-9 through 6.3-11 or explicitly prohibit new sensitive land uses from being sited within CARB’s recommended distances for certain air pollution sources, the SCAQMD staff requests that the lead agency carefully examine all future projects within the Travertine Specific Plan Area. If potentially significant impacts are identified (e.g., a health risk assessment identifies a risk greater than one in one hundred thousand) for any future projects within the Travertine Specific Plan Area the lead agency should prepare the necessary CEQA document pursuant to the Public Resources Code 15168(c). Furthermore, if significant health risks are found in any future project within the Travertine Specific Plan Area the SCAQMD staff recommends that the lead agency adhere to all applicable advisory recommendations for sensitive land uses provided in the CARB Handbook, if feasible. Also, SCAQMD staff requests that pursuant to Section 15168(e) the lead agency place the SCAQMD on future notices of activity.

Construction Emissions Calculations

2. On page 6.3-65 the lead agency states that some or all phases of the proposed project can occur simultaneously or overlap as permitted by market conditions. Also, on page 6.3-76 of the Draft EIR the lead agency notes that it modified the proposed project’s regional construction emissions values (i.e., Table 6.3-20: Estimated Construction Emissions for Both Counties) reported in the URBEMIS2007 Model output sheets, however, the lead agency did not sufficiently substantiate this modification. As a result, SCAQMD staff is concerned that potential simultaneous construction of multiple phases of the project combined with the lead agency’s methodology of dividing the project’s construction emissions by the number of years for construction activity may result in an underestimation of regional construction air quality impacts. Therefore, the SCAQMD staff recommends that the lead agency revise the project’s regional construction air quality impacts to reflect the project’s actual characteristics (i.e., a reasonable worst case scenario for each phase, for example, 2,000 units under construction simultaneously) or use the URBEMIS2007 Model default values to ensure that the project’s regional construction air quality impacts are not underestimated.

Construction Mitigation Measures

3. Given that the lead agency's regional construction and operational air quality analysis demonstrates that the criteria pollutant emissions exceed the SCAQMD's daily significance thresholds for NOX, VOC, PM10 and PM2.5, the SCAQMD recommends that the lead agency consider adding the following mitigation measures to further reduce air quality impacts from all proposed project activities including subsequent projects that are subject to the Travertine Specific Plan:

NOx Mitigation Measures:

- Configure construction parking to minimize traffic interference,
- Provide temporary traffic controls such as a flag person, during all phases of construction to maintain smooth traffic flow,
- Provide dedicated turn lanes for movement of construction trucks and equipment on- and off-site,
- Reroute construction trucks away from congested streets or sensitive receptor areas, and
- Improve traffic flow by signal synchronization.

In addition to the above NOx mitigation measures, SCAQMD staff recommends modifying the last bullet in Mitigation Measure 6.3-2 to include the following:

- ~~The contractor shall use construction equipment that complies with the requirements and compliance schedule of the adopted CARB Regulation for In-Use Off Road Diesel Vehicles in effect at the time of use and use only Tier 2 or newer diesel-fueled (or alternative-fueled) construction equipment during all construction activities. In lieu of this requirement, the contractor may choose to install retrofit technologies, such as particulate traps, selective catalytic reduction, oxidation catalysts, and air enhancement technologies on the same types of large off road construction equipment. These technologies must be certified by CARB and/or the US EPA and must achieve overall emission reductions similar to using Tier 2 construction equipment. This option may not be used if the retrofit technologies are not commercially available and cannot feasibly be retrofitted onto the construction equipment.~~

The project applicant shall require all on-site off-road construction equipment to meet EPA Tier 2 or higher emissions standards according to the following:

- April 1, 2010, to December 31, 2011: All off-road diesel-powered construction equipment greater than 50 hp shall meet Tier 2 off-road emissions standards. In addition, all construction equipment shall be outfitted with the BACT devices certified by CARB. Any emissions control device used by the contractor shall achieve emissions reductions that are no less than what could be achieved by a Level 2 or Level 3 diesel emissions control strategy for a similarly sized engine as defined by CARB regulations.

- January 1, 2012, to December 31, 2014: All off-road diesel-powered construction equipment greater than 50 hp shall meet Tier 3 off-road emissions standards. In addition, all construction equipment shall be outfitted with BACT devices certified by CARB. Any emissions control device used by the contractor shall achieve emissions reductions that are no less than what could be achieved by a Level 3 diesel emissions control strategy for a similarly sized engine as defined by CARB regulations.
- Post-January 1, 2015: All off-road diesel-powered construction equipment greater than 50 hp shall meet the Tier 4 emission standards, where available. In addition, all construction equipment shall be outfitted with BACT devices certified by CARB. Any emissions control device used by the contractor shall achieve emissions reductions that are no less than what could be achieved by a Level 3 diesel emissions control strategy for a similarly sized engine as defined by CARB regulations.

A copy of each unit's certified tier specification, BACT documentation, and CARB or SCAQMD operating permit shall be provided at the time of mobilization of each applicable unit of equipment.

The lead agency may also consider encouraging construction contractors to apply for SCAQMD "SOON" funds. Incentives could be provided for those construction contractors who apply for SCAQMD "SOON" funds. The "SOON" program provides up to \$60 million dollars to accelerate clean up of off-road diesel vehicles, such as heavy duty construction equipment. More information on this program can be found at the following website: <http://www.aqmd.gov/tao/Implementation/SOONProgram.htm>

PM10 and PM2.5 (Fugitive Dust) Mitigation Measures:

- Install wheel washers where vehicles enter and exit the construction site onto paved roads or wash off trucks and any equipment leaving the site each trip,
- Appoint a construction relations officer to act as a community liaison concerning on-site construction activity including resolution of issues related to PM10 generation,
- Apply non-toxic soil stabilizers according to manufacturers' specifications to all inactive construction areas (previously graded areas inactive for ten days or more),
- Replace ground cover in disturbed areas as quickly as possible,
- Suspend all excavating and grading operations when wind speeds (as instantaneous gusts) exceed 25 mph,
- Water active sites at least twice daily,
- All trucks hauling dirt, sand, soil, or other loose materials are to be covered,
- Apply water three times daily, or non-toxic soil stabilizers according to manufacturers' specifications, to all unpaved parking or staging areas or unpaved road surfaces,
- Pave road and road shoulders,
- Traffic speeds on all unpaved roads to be reduced to 15 mph or less, and

- Sweep streets at the end of the day if visible soil is carried onto adjacent public paved roads (recommend water sweepers with reclaimed water).

“Feasible Mitigation”

In addition to the construction mitigation measures recommended above the SCAQMD staff is concerned that many of the mitigation measures proposed by the lead agency are qualified by the statement “to the extent feasible.” Specifically, SCAQMD staff is concerned that integrating this provision with specific mitigation measures may reduce the overall effectiveness of the proposed measure. Therefore, SCAQMD staff recommends that the lead agency provide performance criteria to assist the project applicant in making a feasibility determination for applying project specific mitigation measures during the construction and operational phase of the proposed project.

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emission Calculations

4. The lead agency provided a detailed analysis of potential greenhouse gas emissions from development of this project, and included a variety of enforceable mitigation measures to reduce these emissions. Nonetheless, the lead agency determined that the impact remains significant and unavoidable. SCAQMD notes that despite this conclusion, total emissions from the project may still be underestimated due to the modeling methodology regarding transportation emissions. The lead agency states that transportation emissions account for 66% of total GHG emissions.

Vehicle Trip Length

Vehicle trip lengths appear to be underestimated for a new community that will be built in a remote area over the course of many years. While the Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) in the URBEMIS output is 1,112,699/day, the value used to calculate GHG impacts in Appendix 6.3e is only 816,000/day. This discrepancy may be partially accounted by an assumption of only seven vehicle miles per trip. This is the lowest value of all potential trips (home-shop, commute, etc.), and should not be used to estimate GHG impacts.

In addition, the lead agency states in Appendix 6.3e that the number of trips taken in personal vehicles (e.g., with internal combustion engines) will be reduced by approximately 10%. However the number of VMT reduced may be significantly less than 10% as the substituted walking, biking, and NEV trips will likely be significantly shorter than trips in personal vehicles. The lead agency should re-evaluate the trip length assumptions in the Final EIR and present revised GHG emission estimates if necessary.

Neighborhood Electric Vehicles (NEVs)

The lead agency provides enforceable mechanisms to ensure that infrastructure is provided to support NEV usage. Consequently, the lead agency takes credit for reduced vehicle trips for NEVs. However, the lead agency has no enforceable mechanism to ensure that the trip replacement rate cited in the Draft EIR will occur. The Final EIR should re-evaluate the effectiveness of this project design feature to determine if the GHG emission reductions assigned to it are real and achievable.