



# South Coast Air Quality Management District

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SENT VIA E-MAIL AND USPS:

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## **Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Proposed 13713, 13715, 13717 W Oxnard Street; Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks (ENV-2016-4252)**

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.

### SCAQMD Staff's Summary of Project Description

The Lead Agency proposes to demolish an existing 3,000-square-foot commercial building and construct a 23,197-square-foot condominium building with 16 residential units on 0.27 acres (Proposed Project). Based on a review of aerial photographs, SCAQMD staff found that the Proposed Project would be adjacent to a gasoline dispensing station.

### Air Quality Analysis

SCAQMD staff reviewed the air quality analysis in the MND and found that the Lead Agency did not quantify the Proposed Project's construction or operational emissions. 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 mitigated negative declaration is appropriate when the Lead Agency finds that a 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 Proposed Project's emissions, the MND for the Proposed Project 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 calculate construction and operational emissions and compare those emissions to SCAQMD's air quality CEQA significance thresholds<sup>1</sup> 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. SCAQMD staff recommends that the Lead Agency use this Handbook as guidance to prepare the 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 to quantify emissions. 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).

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<sup>1</sup> South Coast Air Quality Management District. *SCAQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds*. Available at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/scaqmd-air-quality-significance-thresholds.pdf>.

Health Risk Assessment due to the Proposed Project's Proximity to a Gasoline Dispensing Station

Based on the close proximity to a gasoline dispensing station, future residents at the Proposed Project would be exposed to toxic emissions from the gasoline dispensing activities. Therefore, SCAQMD staff recommends that the Lead Agency conduct a Health Risk Assessment (HRA) to disclose the potential health risks to the people who will live and work at the Proposed Project. Guidance for performing a gasoline dispensing station HRA ("*Emission Inventory and Risk Assessment Guidelines for Gasoline Dispensing Stations*") can be found 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).

Guidance on Siting Sensitive Receptors Near Sources of Air Pollution

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 SCAQMD to reduce community exposure to source-specific and cumulative air pollution impacts, SCAQMD adopted the *Guidance Document for Addressing Air Quality Issues in General Plans and Local Planning*<sup>2</sup>. Additionally, the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective*<sup>3</sup> recommends avoiding siting residences within 300 feet of a large gas station or 50 feet for a typical gas station. These Guidance documents provide recommended 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. SCAQMD staff recommends that the Lead Agency review and consider these Guidance documents when making local planning and land use decisions.

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. 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 Ryan Bañuelos, Air Quality Specialist, CEQA Section, at (909) 396-3479, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

*Lijin Sun*

Lijin Sun, J.D.

Program Supervisor, CEQA IGR

Planning, Rule Development & Area Sources

LS:JC:RB

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<sup>2</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>3</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>.