



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 General Plan Amendment (18-2504) Zone Change (18-3503) Design Review (18-7011) Project

South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) 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.

SCAQMD Staff's Summary of Project Description

The Lead Agency is proposing to construct a 96-unit apartment complex and a 2,600-square-foot club house on 7.08 acres (Proposed Project). The Proposed Project is located on the southwest corner of Hoffer Street and North Hathaway Street. Construction of the Proposed Project is expected to occur over approximately 13 months and become operational in 2022¹.

SCAQMD Staff's Summary of Air Quality Analysis

In the Air Quality Analysis, the Lead Agency quantified the Proposed Project's construction and operational emissions and compared those emissions to SCAQMD's regional air quality CEQA significance thresholds. Based on the analysis, the Lead Agency found that the Proposed Project would result in a less than significant regional air quality impact. Additionally, the Lead Agency found that "none of the analyzed criteria pollutants would exceed the calculated local emissions thresholds at the nearest sensitive receptors."² However, the Lead Agency did not conduct a localized air quality impact analysis for construction or operational air quality impacts to support the less than significant finding on the Proposed Project's localized air quality impacts.

SCAQMD Staff's General Comments

SCAQMD staff is concerned with the Lead Agency's finding that the Proposed Project's localized air quality impacts resulting from construction and operational activities would be less than significant because the MND did not include quantification of localized emissions for comparison to SCAQMD's localized air quality CEQA significance thresholds. Therefore, SCAQMD staff recommends that the Lead Agency support this finding by revising the MND to include a localized air quality impact analysis that quantifies localized emissions and compares those emissions to the appropriate SCAQMD Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs). In the event that this revision results in a finding that a new significant impact would occur, feasible mitigation measures would be required under CEQA. Detailed comments and potential mitigation measures are provided in the attachment.

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

¹ MND. Page 175

² MND. Page 18.

process. Please provide the SCAQMD with written responses to all comments contained herein prior to the adoption of the Final MND. When responding to issues raised in the comments, response 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 to the public who are interested in the Proposed Project.

SCAQMD staff is available to work with the Lead Agency to address these issues and any other questions that may arise. Please contact Robert Dalbeck, Assistant Air Quality Specialist, at (909) 396-2139 or RDalbeck@aqmd.gov, if you have any questions regarding these comments.

Sincerely,

Lijin Sun

Lijin Sun, J. D.

Program Supervisor, CEQA IGR

Planning, Rule Development & Area Sources

Attachment
LS:RD
RVC190313-02
Control Number

ATTACHMENT

Localized Air Quality Impact Analysis

1. Air quality impacts from both construction and operation activities should be calculated. Construction-related air quality impacts typically include, but are not limited to, emissions from the use of heavy-duty equipment required during grading, earth-loading/unloading, paving, architectural coatings, and on-road mobile sources (e.g., construction worker vehicle trips, material transport trips). Operational impacts from residential projects typically include area sources (e.g. architectural coatings, consumer products, hearths), mobile sources (e.g. residential vehicle trips, materials delivery, road dust), and energy consumption (e.g. electricity, gas, water). These emission sources have enough specificity to reasonably assume which of those emissions would be emitted on-site, such as off-road construction equipment or area sources during operation. The SCAQMD LSTs methodology and associated mass look-up tables are not designed to evaluate localized impacts from mobile sources traveling over the roadways. LSTs represent the maximum emissions from a project that will not cause or contribute to an exceedance of the most stringent applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard, and are developed based upon the total area of the emissions source, the ambient air quality in each source receptor area (SRA) in which the emission source is located, and the distance to the nearest sensitive receptor. Sensitive receptors are people that have an increased sensitivity to air pollution or environmental contaminants. They include schools, parks and playgrounds, daycare centers, nursing homes, elderly care facilities, hospitals, and residential dwelling units.

Based on a review of the MND and aerial photographs, SCAQMD staff found that the Proposed Project is approximately seven acres in size, and that sensitive receptors are located immediately adjacent to the Proposed Project within 25 meters. In the MND, the Lead Agency stated that “The thresholds for a 7-acre site with sensitive receptors located within 25 meters of property lines were used to analyze the proposed project and represent a worst-case scenario³.” However, SCAQMD’s Final LST Methodology Mass Rate LST Look-Up Table does not include thresholds for a 7-acre site⁴. Additionally, the Lead agency performed a regional air quality analysis for the Proposed Project and used it to correlate with or substitute for a need for a localized air quality analysis. Specifically, the Lead Agency did not quantify the Proposed Project’s localized construction or operational emissions in the MND, nor did they compare those emissions to the appropriate SCAQMD CEQA air quality LSTs. To ensure that any nearby sensitive receptors are not adversely affected by the construction or operational activities that are occurring in close proximity, SCAQMD staff recommends that the Lead Agency quantify the Proposed Project’s localized construction and operational emissions and disclose the localized air quality impacts in the Final MND to support a finding that the Proposed Project’s localized air quality impacts would be less than significant necessitating no mitigation measures. SCAQMD guidance for performing a localized air quality analysis is available on SCAQMD’s website⁵.

Recommended Mitigation Measures

2. In the event that the Lead Agency finds, after revisions to the Air Quality Analysis based on Comment No. 1, that the Proposed Project’s localized construction or operational emissions would be significant, implementation of feasible mitigation measures would be required under CEQA.

³ MND. Page 17.

⁴ South Coast Air Quality Management District. *Localized Significance Thresholds: Appendix C - Mass Rate LST Look-Up Table*. Accessed at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/localized-significance-thresholds/appendix-c-mass-rate-lst-look-up-tables.pdf>.

⁵ South Coast Air Quality Management District. *Localized Significance Thresholds*. Accessed at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/regulations/ceqa/air-quality-analysis-handbook/localized-significance-thresholds>.

SCAQMD staff has compiled a list of recommended mitigation measures as suggested resources and guidance to the Lead Agency to assist the identification of feasible mitigation measures, if needed and required under CEQA for the Proposed Project, for incorporation in the Final MND.

Mitigation Measures for Construction Impacts

- a. Require the use of off-road diesel-powered construction equipment that meets or exceeds the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and U.S. EPA Tier 4 off-road emissions standards for equipment rated at 50 horsepower or greater during construction to further reduce criteria pollutant emissions. Such equipment will be outfitted with Best Available Control Technology (BACT) devices including a CARB certified Level 3 Diesel Particulate Filters (DPFs). Level 3 DPFs are capable of achieving at least 85 percent reduction in particulate matter emissions⁶. A list of CARB verified DPFs are available on the CARB website⁷. To ensure that Tier 4 construction equipment or better will be used during the Proposed Project's construction, SCAQMD staff recommends that the Lead Agency include this requirement in applicable bid documents, purchase orders, and contracts. Successful contractor(s) must demonstrate the ability to supply the compliant construction equipment for use prior to any ground disturbing and construction activities. A copy of each unit's certified tier specification or model year specification and CARB or SCAQMD operating permit (if applicable) shall be available upon request at the time of mobilization of each applicable unit of equipment. Additionally, the Lead Agency should require periodic reporting and provision of written construction documents by construction contractor(s) to ensure compliance, and conduct regular inspections to the maximum extent feasible to ensure compliance.

Mitigation Measures for Operational Impacts

- b. Provide electric vehicle (EV) charging stations. Require at least 5% of all vehicle parking spaces include EV charging stations. Vehicles that can operate at least partially on electricity have the ability to substantially reduce the significant NOx and ROG impacts. It is important to make this electrical infrastructure available when the Proposed Project is built. The cost of installing electrical charging equipment onsite is significantly cheaper if completed when the project is built compared to retrofitting an existing building. Therefore, SCAQMD staff recommends the Lead Agency require the Proposed Project to provide the appropriate infrastructure to facilitate sufficient electric charging for vehicles to plug-in in the Final MND.
- c. Maximize use of solar energy including solar panels; installing the maximum possible number of solar energy arrays on the building roofs throughout the apartment complex to generate solar energy for the respective buildings.
- d. Maximize the planting of trees in landscaping and parking lots.
- e. Use light colored paving and roofing materials.
- f. Require use of electric or alternatively fueled street-sweepers with HEPA filters.
- g. Require use of electric lawn mowers and leaf blowers.
- h. Utilize only Energy Star heating, cooling, and lighting devices, and appliances.
- i. Use of water-based or low VOC cleaning products.

⁶ California Air Resources Board. November 16-17, 2004. *Diesel Off-Road Equipment Measure – Workshop*. Page 17. Accessed at: https://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/ordiesel/presentations/nov16-04_workshop.pdf.

⁷ *Ibid*. Page 18.