

May 27, 2020

Russell Brady  
Project Planner  
Riverside County  
4080 Lemon Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
P.O. Box 1409  
Riverside, California 92502  
Submitted via email: [rbrady@rivco.org](mailto:rbrady@rivco.org)

Dear Russell Brady:

Thank you for providing the California Air Resources Board (CARB) with the opportunity to comment on the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Stoneridge Commerce Center (Project) Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR), State Clearinghouse No. 2020040325. The Project proposes to develop the 582.9 acre site under either a Primarily Land Use Plan or Alternative Land Use Plan. The Primary Land Use Plan proposes the development of up to 389.2 acres of Light Industrial land uses, 49.1 acres of Business Park land uses, and 8.0 acres of Commercial Retail land uses. Alternatively, under the Alternative Land Use Plan, the site would be developed to include up to 389.2 acres of Light Industrial land uses, 51.5 acres of Business Park land uses, and 8.5 acres of Commercial Retail land uses. The Project is proposed within an unincorporated area of Riverside County (County), California, which is the lead agency for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) purposes.

Freight facilities, such as warehouse and distribution facilities, can result in high daily volumes of heavy-duty diesel truck traffic and operation of on-site equipment (e.g., forklifts and yard tractors) that emit toxic diesel emissions, and contribute to regional air pollution and global climate change.<sup>1</sup> CARB has reviewed the NOP and is concerned about the air pollution and health risk impacts that would result should the County approve the Project.

### **I. The Project Would Increase Exposure to Air Pollution in Disadvantaged Communities**

The Project, if approved, will expose nearby disadvantaged communities to elevated levels of air pollution. Residences are located south, east, and west of the Project site, with the closest residences situated approximately 2,400 feet of the Project's

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<sup>1</sup> With regard to greenhouse gas emissions from this project, CARB has been clear that local governments and project proponents have a responsibility to properly mitigate these impacts. CARB's guidance, set out in detail in the Scoping Plan issued in 2017, makes clear that in CARB's expert view, local mitigation is critical to achieving climate goals and reducing greenhouse gases below levels of significance.

southeastern boundary. In addition to residences, 3 schools (Orange Vista High School, Sierra Vista Elementary School, and Avalon Elementary School) are located within 2 miles of the Project. The community is surrounded by existing toxic diesel particulate matter (diesel PM) emission sources, which include vehicular traffic along Interstate 215 (I-215) and local roadways. Due to the Project's proximity to residences and schools already disproportionately burdened by multiple sources of air pollution, CARB is concerned with the potential cumulative health impacts associated with the construction and operation of the Project.

The State of California has placed additional emphasis on protecting local communities from the harmful effects of air pollution through the passage of Assembly Bill 617 (AB 617) (Garcia, Chapter 136, Statutes of 2017). AB 617 is a significant piece of air quality legislation that highlights the need for further emission reductions in communities with high exposure burdens, like those in which the Project is located. Diesel PM emissions generated during the construction and operation of the Project would negatively impact the community, which is already disproportionally impacted by air pollution from traffic on I-215 and local roadways.

Through its authority under Health and Safety Code section 39711, the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) is charged with the duty to identify disadvantaged communities. CalEPA bases its identification of these communities on geographic, socioeconomic, public health, and environmental hazard criteria (Health and Safety Code, section 39711, subsection (a)). In this capacity, CalEPA currently defines a disadvantaged community, from an environmental hazard and socioeconomic standpoint, as a community that scores within the top 25 percent of the census tracts, as analyzed by the California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool Version 3.0 (CalEnviroScreen). CalEnviroScreen uses a screening methodology to help identify California communities currently disproportionately burdened by multiple sources of pollution. The census tract containing the Project is within the top 5 percent for Pollution Burden<sup>2</sup> and is considered a disadvantaged community; therefore, CARB urges the County to ensure that the Project does not adversely impact neighboring disadvantaged communities.

## **II. The DEIR Should Quantify and Discuss the Potential Cancer Risks from On-site Transport Refrigeration Units**

Since the Project description does not explicitly state that the proposed industrial land uses would not be used for cold storage, there is a possibility that trucks and trailers visiting the Project site would be equipped with transport refrigeration units (TRU).<sup>3</sup> TRUs on trucks and trailers can emit large quantities of diesel exhaust while operating within the Project site. Residences and other sensitive receptors (e.g., daycare

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<sup>2</sup> Pollution Burden represents the potential exposures to pollutants and the adverse environmental conditions caused by pollution.

<sup>3</sup> TRUs are refrigeration systems powered by integral diesel engines that protect perishable goods during transport in an insulated truck and trailer vans, rail cars, and domestic shipping containers.

facilities, senior care facilities, and schools) located near where these TRUs could be operating, would be exposed to diesel exhaust emissions that would result in a significant cancer risk impact.

CARB urges the County to model air pollutant emissions from on-site TRUs in the DEIR, as well as include potential cancer risks from on-site TRUs in the Project's health risk assessment (HRA). The HRA prepared for the Project should account for all potential health risks from Project-related diesel PM emission sources such as backup generators, TRUs, and heavy-duty truck traffic, and include all the air pollutant reduction measures listed in Attachment A.

In addition to the health risks associated with operational emissions, health risks associated with construction emissions should also be included in the air quality section of the DEIR and the Project's HRA. Construction of the Project would result in short-term diesel emissions from the use of both on-road and off-road diesel equipment. The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment's (OEHHA) guidance recommends assessing cancer risks for construction projects lasting longer than two months. Since construction would very likely occur over a period lasting longer than two months, the HRA prepared for the Project should include health risks for existing residences near the Project site during construction.

The HRA prepared in support of the Project should be based on the latest OEHHA guidance (2015 Air Toxics Hot Spots Program Guidance Manual for Preparation of Health Risk Assessments),<sup>4</sup> and the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) CEQA Air Quality Handbook.<sup>5</sup> The HRA should evaluate and present the existing baseline (current conditions), future baseline (full build-out year, without the Project), and future year with the Project. The health risks modeled under both the existing and the future baselines should reflect all applicable federal, state, and local rules and regulations. By evaluating health risks using both baselines, the public and County planners will have a complete understanding of the potential health impacts that would result from the Project.

### **III. Conclusion**

To reduce the exposure of toxic diesel PM emissions in disadvantaged communities already disproportionately impacted by air pollution, the final design of the Project should include all existing and emerging zero-emission technologies to minimize diesel PM and oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>) emissions, as well as the greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change. CARB encourages the County and applicant to implement the measures listed in Attachment A of this comment letter to reduce the Project's construction and operational air pollution emissions.

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<sup>4</sup>. Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA). Air Toxics Hot Spots Program Guidance Manual for Preparation of Health Risk Assessments. February 2015. Accessed at: <https://oehha.ca.gov/media/downloads/cmr/2015guidancemanual.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup>. SCAQMD's 1993 Handbook can be found at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/rules-compliance/ceqa/air-quality-analysis-handbook>.

Given the breadth and scope of projects subject to CEQA review throughout California that have air quality and greenhouse gas impacts, coupled with CARB's limited staff resources to substantively respond to all issues associated with a project, CARB must prioritize its substantive comments here based on staff time, resources, and its assessment of impacts. CARB's deliberate decision to substantively comment on some issues does not constitute an admission or concession that it substantively agrees with the lead agency's findings and conclusions on any issues on which CARB does not substantively submit comments.

CARB appreciates the opportunity to comment on the NOP for the Project and can provide assistance on zero-emission technologies and emission reduction strategies, as needed. Please include CARB on your State Clearinghouse list of selected State agencies that will receive the DEIR as part of the comment period. If you have questions, please contact Stanley Armstrong, Air Pollution Specialist, at (916) 440-8242 or via email at [stanley.armstrong@arb.ca.gov](mailto:stanley.armstrong@arb.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard Boyd".

Richard Boyd, Chief  
Risk Reduction Branch  
Transportation and Toxics Division

Attachment

cc: See next page.

cc: State Clearinghouse  
[state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov](mailto:state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov)

Carlo De La Cruz  
Senior Campaign Representative  
Sierra Club  
[carlo.delacruz@sierraclub.org](mailto:carlo.delacruz@sierraclub.org)

Lijin Sun  
Program Supervisor  
CEQA Intergovernmental Review  
South Coast Air Quality Management District  
[lsun@aqmd.gov](mailto:lsun@aqmd.gov)

Morgan Capilla  
NEPA Reviewer  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Air Division, Region 9  
[capilla.morgan@epa.gov](mailto:capilla.morgan@epa.gov)

Taylor Thomas  
Research and Policy Analyst  
East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice  
[tbthomas@eycej.org](mailto:tbthomas@eycej.org)

Andrea Vidaurre  
Policy Analyst  
Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice  
[andrea.v@ccaej.org](mailto:andrea.v@ccaej.org)

Stanley Armstrong  
Air Pollution Specialist  
Risk Analysis Section  
Transportation and Toxics Division  
[stanley.armstrong@arb.ca.gov](mailto:stanley.armstrong@arb.ca.gov)

## **ATTACHMENT A**

### **Recommended Air Pollution Emission Reduction Measures for Warehouses and Distribution Centers**

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) recommends developers and government planners use all existing and emerging zero to near-zero emission technologies during project construction and operation to minimize public exposure to air pollution. Below are some measures, currently recommended by CARB, specific to warehouse and distribution center projects. These recommendations are subject to change as new zero-emission technologies become available.

#### **Recommended Construction Measures**

1. Ensure the cleanest possible construction practices and equipment are used. This includes eliminating the idling of diesel-powered equipment and providing the necessary infrastructure (e.g., electrical hookups) to support zero and near-zero equipment and tools.
2. Implement, and plan accordingly for, the necessary infrastructure to support the zero and near-zero emission technology vehicles and equipment that will be operating on site. Necessary infrastructure may include the physical (e.g., needed footprint), energy, and fueling infrastructure for construction equipment, on-site vehicles and equipment, and medium-heavy and heavy-heavy duty trucks.
3. In construction contracts, include language that requires all off-road diesel-powered equipment used during construction to be equipped with Tier 4 or cleaner engines, except for specialized construction equipment in which Tier 4 engines are not available. In place of Tier 4 engines, off-road equipment can incorporate retrofits, such that, emission reductions achieved equal or exceed that of a Tier 4 engine.
4. In construction contracts, include language that requires all off-road equipment with a power rating below 19 kilowatts (e.g., plate compactors, pressure washers) used during project construction be battery powered.
5. In construction contracts, include language that requires all heavy-duty trucks entering the construction site, during the grading and building construction phases be model year 2014 or later. All heavy-duty haul trucks should also meet CARB's lowest optional low-oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>) standard starting in the year 2022.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>: In 2013, CARB adopted optional low-NO<sub>x</sub> emission standards for on-road heavy-duty engines. CARB encourages engine manufacturers to introduce new technologies to reduce NO<sub>x</sub> emissions below the current mandatory on-road heavy-duty diesel engine emission standards for model year 2010 and later. CARB's optional low-NO<sub>x</sub> emission standard is available at: <https://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/onroad/optionnox/optionnox.htm>.

6. In construction contracts, include language that requires all construction equipment and fleets to be in compliance with all current air quality regulations. CARB is available to assist in implementing this recommendation.

## **Recommended Operation Measures**

1. Include contractual language in tenant lease agreements that requires tenants to use the cleanest technologies available, and to provide the necessary infrastructure to support zero-emission vehicles and equipment that will be operating on site.
2. Include contractual language in tenant lease agreements that requires all loading/unloading docks and trailer spaces be equipped with electrical hookups for trucks with transport refrigeration units (TRU) or auxiliary power units. This requirement will substantially decrease the amount of time that a TRU powered by a fossil-fueled internal combustion engine can operate at the project site. Use of zero-emission all-electric plug-in TRUs, hydrogen fuel cell transport refrigeration, and cryogenic transport refrigeration are encouraged and can also be included in lease agreements.<sup>2</sup>
3. Include contractual language in tenant lease agreements that requires all TRUs entering the project site be plug-in capable.
4. Include contractual language in tenant lease agreements that requires future tenants to exclusively use zero-emission light and medium-duty delivery trucks and vans.
5. Include contractual language in tenant lease agreements requiring all TRUs, trucks, and cars entering the Project site be zero-emission.
6. Include contractual language in tenant lease agreements that requires all service equipment (e.g., yard hostlers, yard equipment, forklifts, and pallet jacks) used within the project site to be zero-emission. This equipment is widely available.
7. Include contractual language in tenant lease agreements that requires all heavy-duty trucks entering or on the project site to be model year 2014 or later, expedite a transition to zero-emission vehicles, and be fully zero-emission beginning in 2030.

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<sup>2</sup>. CARB's Technology Assessment for Transport Refrigerators provides information on the current and projected development of TRUs, including current and anticipated costs. The assessment is available at: [https://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/tech/techreport/tru\\_07292015.pdf](https://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/tech/techreport/tru_07292015.pdf).

8. Include contractual language in tenant lease agreements that requires the tenant be in, and monitor compliance with, all current air quality regulations for on-road trucks including CARB's Heavy-Duty (Tractor-Trailer) Greenhouse Gas Regulation,<sup>3</sup> Periodic Smoke Inspection Program (PSIP),<sup>4</sup> and the Statewide Truck and Bus Regulation.<sup>5</sup>
9. Include contractual language in tenant lease agreements restricting trucks and support equipment from idling longer than 5 minutes while on site.
10. Include contractual language in tenant lease agreements that limits on-site TRU diesel engine runtime to no longer than 15 minutes. If no cold storage operations are planned, include contractual language and permit conditions that prohibit cold storage operations unless a health risk assessment is conducted, and the health impacts fully mitigated.
11. Include rooftop solar panels for each proposed warehouse to the extent feasible, with a capacity that matches the maximum allowed for distributed solar connections to the grid.

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<sup>3</sup>. In December 2008, CARB adopted a regulation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by improving the fuel efficiency of heavy-duty tractors that pull 53-foot or longer box-type trailers. The regulation applies primarily to owners of 53-foot or longer box-type trailers, including both dry-van and refrigerated-van trailers, and owners of the heavy-duty tractors that pull them on California highways. CARB's Heavy-Duty (Tractor-Trailer) Greenhouse Gas Regulation is available at: <https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/hdghg/hdghg.htm>.

<sup>4</sup>. The PSIP program requires that diesel and bus fleet owners conduct annual smoke opacity inspections of their vehicles and repair those with excessive smoke emissions to ensure compliance. CARB's PSIP program is available at: <https://www.arb.ca.gov/enf/hdvp/hdvp.htm>.

<sup>5</sup>. The regulation requires that newer heavier trucks and buses must meet particulate matter filter requirements beginning January 1, 2012. Lighter and older heavier trucks must be replaced starting January 1, 2015. By January 1, 2023, nearly all trucks and buses will need to have 2010 model year engines or equivalent. CARB's Statewide Truck and Bus Regulation is available at: <https://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/onrdiesel/onrdiesel.htm>.