New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

A Guenther submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: I support this! A northbound gas station is needed and can't wait for this to open!

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

A Popa submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: Finally another option besides ARCO!! Can't wait for this to open. I support this!

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

A Smith submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-SP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: Definitely support this!

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Alex Keon submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: I support this project. I drive to Riverside for school and this gas station is in the perfect spot

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Alfred Pesiri submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: As someone who lived in North County and still goes to the area regularly, I support this project.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Allan Gutierrez submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STOP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: Definitely need a gas station on the north side!!

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Andrew H submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: This gas station will save a lot of time and hopefully a lot of money if it helps Arco lower their prices.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Andrew McPartland submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: I frequently drive along this area and would greatly appreciate more gas options (also the refreshments/ snacks that come with) along the route, seems like a great idea for the community.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Arty Hernandez submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: I've always felt it was super inconvenient going to the Arco there. I fully support having a new gas station on the north side!

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

C Popa submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: I support this!

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

C Russell submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

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eComment: I support this

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Chris Shotz submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

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eComment: I would like to see a higher end gas station not just the Arco on Deer Springs RD.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Craig Grimm submitted a new eComment.

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eComment: I drive I-15 freeway 3-4 times a week. The freeway and area are badly in need of a second gas station and services, going north bound. The overpass is always crowded as is the ARCO on the west side of freeway. I support another gas station in the area and less congestion then the west side. This will be very helpful to the Hidden Meadow neighborhood along with the Lawerence Welk neighborhood.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

debby mccaslin submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: I support the KA Shell gas station. Shells are so much more clean and safe.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Deborah Muro submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: I support it

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FHmi Marini submitted a new eComment.

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eComment: Suport

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

G A submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: I support this project

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Hana Svitek submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

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eComment: I support this project.

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Howard Balaban submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

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eComment: I am in the area for business every week and that would be a great convenience for me. I am in the Tequila business. Our distributor would greatly appreciate it as well.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

J Fleming submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

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eComment: I'm always looking for alternative gas station options when I drive through this area. I support a shell gas station at this location.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

James Muro submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: Yes this would be great

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Jarrett Rustich submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: A gas station off 15 NB on east side of freeway would be very convenient for all San Diegans!

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Jason Weller submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

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eComment: More gas is needed on this I-15 corridor between San Diego and Temecula. I will not go to the Arco on the other side of the freeway due to its above market pricing. There is no one else close by. A competitor will make gas more affordable for all of us. Win-win
New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Jeremy Dentt submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: In favor of this project

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Jill Smith submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: As a senior woman who drives the 15 regularly this additional gas station is necessary for the area not only for convenience, but for safety. I support this proposal. Thank you for your consideration.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

jim Purdy submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

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eComment: Arco gets all the bussines, so a 2nd gas station is surely needed for the North bound folks and anybody that wants Shell gas products as well. The Lawrence Welk residents will clearly use it, as their access road runs up the hill to the Shell location.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Jordan Beal submitted a new eComment.

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eComment: What a great welcome addition to the area!

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

K Guenther submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: YES!!!

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

K T submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: 100% support for a northbound gas station

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Kate H submitted a new eComment.

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eComment: I absolutely support a station on the north side, as I commute and use this route frequently. An alternative to Arco is much needed and would be so appreciated.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Kayvan Homayoun submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: 100% support this station as it will help commuters have more/better options along the I-15 in this area.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Kayvon Agahnia submitted a new eComment.

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eComment: I SUPPORT this project. I drive the I-15 corridor routinely and I look forward to be able to stop by this station to refuel and use their amenities.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Ken Assi submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: I think this gas station would be of tremendous benefit to all of us who travel up and down the I15 through this sparsely serviced area.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Kevin Smith submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: We need a new modern gas station on the north bound side of the freeway.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Kourosh Julazadeh submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: I FULLY support this project. Very convenient.

View and Analyze eComments
New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

L S submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-TP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: SUPPORT!!

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Lisa Green submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

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eComment: We really need this gas station on the north side. It would make the drive so much more convenient! Please please please!

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

M P submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: support

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Matt Sander submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: I support this new gas station. The location on the north side will also be more convenient for me.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Megan Thomas submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

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eComment: I support this because a station is needed on the northbound side

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Melissa Gutierrez submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

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eComment: We need a station on the north bound side-this is very important! Support 100%

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Michael Naoum submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

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eComment: I totally support this project!

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

niko kaveh submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: i support this project it sounds like a strong community improvement

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Oskar Burman submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

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eComment: It would be very convenient to have a gas station on the Northside of the 15 here. This would be great!

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Ray Grimm submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: I drive I-15 once or twice weekly and another Gas Station at this intersection would provide a more price competitive alternative than the Arco station on the west side of the freeway. This would be great for the Hidden Meadows neighborhood as well.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Scott Kaplan submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: I ABSOLUTELY support this project...anyone who drives the 15 knows the value of this location, station and all that goes with it.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Thomas Anderson submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

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eComment: Support! Would love to have other gas options in the area.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Tony Fashandi submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: We support this development

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Vida Badiie submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

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eComment: I completely support this project.

View and Analyze eComments
New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Will Smith submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: An alternative option to the existing Arco station is greatly needed for this area.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Zach Johnson submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: I support it.

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New eComment for Zoning Administrator Hearing

Zack Popa submitted a new eComment.

Meeting: Zoning Administrator Hearing

Item: 4. KA Shell and Convenience Store; PDS2017-STP-17-028, PDS2017-BC-17-0069, PDS2017-ER-17-08-008 To speak on this item call (619) 343-2539 and use ID 913186022#

eComment: I support this

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May 20, 2020

Zoning Administrator
County of San Diego
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110
San Diego, CA  92123

VIA EMAIL

To Whom it May Concern:

On behalf of Mesa Rock, LLC; I urge the Zoning Administrator to find the project does not qualify for an exemption under Section 15183 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (“Guidelines”).

This project has several peculiar characteristics that were raised in my comment letter dated January 16, 2020. The project represents a significant increase in the intensity of use with a gas station with 16 pumps and a 3,500 square foot convenience store on a 1.61-acre project site. The project site is not served by sanitary sewer and will rely on a septic system and a leach field for wastewater disposal. It is unusual for a retail development of this size to rely on septic system rather than sanitary sewer.

The findings in support of an exemption under Guidelines section 15183 rely on the County’s Climate Action Plan for mitigation of greenhouse gases (GHG). This plan has been set aside by the courts and cannot be relied upon for mitigation of greenhouse gases. Rather, the County should be relying upon the standards set by the California Air Resources Control Board. These standards rely heavily on the use of the California Emissions Estimator Model (CAIEMod) to “quantify air quality and climate change impacts as part of the preparation of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents.” (CalIEMod User’s Guide, Version 2016.3.2, p. 1.) “The CAIEMod provides a simple platform to calculate both construction emissions and operational emissions from a land use project.” (Ibid.)

The CAIEMod is only effective with the proper data input as a starting point. A review of the CAIEMod prepared by the applicant shows a number of flawed assumptions:

- 1.2 Project Characteristics
  - The applicant characterized the Land Use Setting as “Urban” when the area is suburban at best but more readily defined as rural. The User’s Guide defines
Urban as “Project which is located within the central city, may be characterized by multi-family housing, located near office and retail.” As the staff report shows, the project site is located near vacant land, with a gas station and fire station across the freeway. The model should have been run relying on a land use setting of rural.

- The applicant modified the default values with no explanation. The User’s Guide instructs that any modifications of default values should be supported by substantial evidence and an explanation is required in the remarks box to justify and support the modification. The remarks contain blanket statements, i.e. “Haul trips adjusted per client info re: grading/import and export.” In the alternative, there is no explanation in the remarks for many of the modifications of the default values.

- **Construction Detail**
  - The applicant relied on a lot area of one acre or less to set default values for construction detail. The CAP Checklist identifies the site as 1.61 acres, the construction detail should have relied on the default values for 2 acres or less. The use of a significantly smaller project area resulted in a gross underestimation of project days, construction equipment usage, workers and vendors with a concomitant underestimation of emissions.

- **Water Detail**
  - The water detail fails to include landscaped areas, the applicant should have included Other Non-Asphalt Surfaces.
  - There is no consideration of wastewater. Wastewater may have direct emissions of GHGs depending on the type of treatment. This must be considered in the CalEEMod.

- **Waste Detail**
  - Waste detail failed to consider landscaped areas.

The CalEEMod relied upon in the CAP checklist does not accurately reflect the GHG impacts anticipated from the project due to reduced inputs not consistent the User’s Guide for the CalEEMod. The flawed inputs utilized by the applicant underestimates GHG emissions. This flawed use of the model combined with the County’s lack of a Climate Action Plan create a peculiar situation in that there is no substantial evidence to support a finding the project will not have significant GHG impacts.

The Initial Study relies on the use of TIF to mitigate traffic impacts. TIF cannot mitigate traffic impacts if there is little likelihood the capital improvements relied on to develop the TIF will be constructed in the foreseeable future. Given that all major subdivisions in the north county have been defeated by the voters in the recent past – there is little likelihood the facilities will be built due to the loss of TIF funding. Therefore, the TIF will not mitigate traffic impacts.\(^1\) Similarly, the County cannot rely on mitigation measures required in the General Plan Update Report if there is little likelihood those measures will be executed. The EIR was approved in 2011, yet the County has not adopted a legal CAP as required to mitigate GHG. This project does not qualify for an exemption under of CEQA Guidelines section 15183 because the project

\(^1\) The staff report considers Deer Spring Road a 4-lane facility to bring LOS from F to D. In fact, Deer Springs Road is a 2-lane facility and continues to operate at LOS F. This project will contribute traffic to this failing road segment resulting in a significant traffic impact.
may cause significant environmental impacts.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these issues, I look forward to your final decision on this exemption. I remain available if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Regards,

Julie M. Hamilton
Attorney for Mesa Rock, LLC
May 19, 2020

San Diego County Zoning Administrator
5520 Overland Ave.
San Diego, CA 92123

Re: KA Shell Gas Station and Convenience Store – Case/File No. PDS2017-STP-17-028; PDS2017- BC-17-0069; PDS2017-ER-17-08-008

To the County Zoning Administrator:

These comments are provided on behalf of the applicant, KA Enterprises (“KA”), which proposes to construct a gas station/mini mart on the southeast corner of the northbound Interstate 15 off-ramp and Deer Springs Road (“Project”). KA provides these comments to support the conclusions in the Zoning Administrator Hearing Report (“Staff Report”).

Specifically, the Staff Report concludes that, because the Project is consistent with the County’s 2011 General Plan Update (“GPU”) and its Zoning Ordinance, review of the Project under the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) is limited by Public Resources Code § 21083.3 and CEQA Guideline § 15183 to those effects on the environment which are “peculiar to the parcel or project” and which were not addressed in the environmental impact report for the GPU (“GPU EIR”). The conclusion in the Staff Report that none of the impacts of the Project are “peculiar” and that they were addressed in the GPU EIR is supported by state law, by the Staff’s analysis of the Project, by the third-party studies of the potential impacts of the Project provided for public comment, and by this letter. The Zoning Administrator should adopt the recommendations of County Staff and find that the analysis of the Project has been conducted in compliance with CEQA.

I. There Are No Effects That Are “Peculiar” to the Project or to the Parcel

Because the Project is consistent with the GPU and the Zoning Ordinance, Public Resources Code § 21083.3 (with emphasis added) mandates that the County’s CEQA review of the Project “shall be limited to effects on the environment which are peculiar to the parcel or project and which were not addressed” in the GPU EIR. Under this explicit statutory exemption from CEQA and under CEQA Guideline § 15183, which is based on that statutory provision, an
effect of a project must satisfy both conditions before the County can require additional CEQA review.

In addition, further analysis of potential off-site and cumulative impacts of the Project that were addressed in the GPU EIR is statutorily limited to those impacts which substantial evidence shows will be greater than those impacts described in the GPU EIR. (PRC § 21083.3(c).) The Staff Report properly concludes that there are no “peculiar” effects of the Project and that all the potential effects of the Project were addressed adequately in the GPU EIR.

As a general matter, the construction of a gas station/mini mart on a small parcel next to an interstate highway does not usually generate “peculiar” impacts. Such facilities are located next to freeways throughout the county and the state. Notably, a gas station/mini mart already is located on the northwest corner of Interstate 15 and Deer Springs Road across Interstate 15 from the Project site. That business appears to be the source of the only opposition to the Project.

Given that such projects are commonly located in similar areas, an environmental effect of this Project would be “peculiar” only if (1) the environmental effect caused by a gas station/mini mart project “belongs exclusively or especially” to this Project or parcel or (2) the environmental effects are “characteristic of only” this Project or parcel. (Wal-Mart Stores v. City of Turlock (2006) 138 Cal.App.4th 273, 287.) There is no evidence that the impacts of this Project are any different from those of any other similar project, including the gas station/mini mart located across Interstate 15 from the Project site.

In addition, under CEQA an “effect” is not considered “peculiar” if “uniformly applied development policies or standards” will substantially mitigate a project’s effects. (PRC § 21083.3(d).) The absence of such policies or standards, however, does not mean that the effect should be considered “peculiar.” (CEQA § Guideline 15183(h).)

In this case, the Project must be constructed in accordance with County development policies and standards, including those related to building codes, grading, air quality, stormwater, greenhouse gases, and noise. The operation of the Project also must comply with County (and state and federal where applicable) policies and standards governing such things as the operation of the gas station and the underground storage tanks, the management of drainage and stormwater on the site, and the installation and use of the on-site septic system to treat wastewater. The fact that the Project must comply with these County development policies and standards is another reason why no impacts of the Project are “peculiar” under these provisions of CEQA.

There also are no peculiar effects that will arise from constructing and operating the Project on the parcel. The parcel is a relatively small, already developed area sandwiched between Interstate 15, Deer Springs Road, and Centre City Parkway. The site has been disturbed and developed for years, and currently is occupied by a commercial outdoor furniture business. The parcel does not contain any sensitive biological or known cultural resources, and the Project will comply with the County’s Resource Protection Ordinance and with GPU EIR mitigation.
measures intended to protect unknown cultural resources if they are discovered during construction.

But, even though the type and location of the Project, the disturbed nature of the Project site, and the comprehensive nature of the GPU EIR made it unlikely that there were environmental impacts that were “peculiar” to the Project or the parcel that had not been addressed in the GPU EIR, KA still prepared environmental studies for the County to assess the potential impacts of the Project. Those studies addressed the potential impacts of the Project to traffic, air quality, climate change, and drainage. For example, the comprehensive air quality study conducted found that emissions generated during construction and operation would be well below County screening thresholds so there would be no impacts to regional or local air quality. The other studies also confirmed that the none of the potential impacts of the Project were peculiar or significant, as described more fully in the Staff Report.

II. The Only Comments on the Project Did Not Identify Any Peculiar Impacts

The Staff Report properly addressed the only comments on the Project submitted during the CEQA public comment period. Those comments were submitted on behalf of Mesa Rock, LLC, an entity described in the comments only as a “business owner in the vicinity” of the Project site. Those comments did not identify any impacts that they claimed were peculiar to the Project or to the parcel, but merely asserted that (1) the traffic analysis for the Project was dated and failed to consider the traffic that would be generated by the Newlands-Sierra project, (2) the proposed management of drainage on the site was inadequate, and (3) the use of a septic system for the Project was improper.

In response to the comments, KA had a revised traffic study prepared by its traffic expert. That study found that traffic on Deer Springs Road in 2019 had decreased since the initial traffic study was completed, meaning that the original analysis was conservative in assessing the traffic impacts of the Project. In addition, since the comments were submitted, voters have rejected the Newlands-Sierra project, so the traffic it would have generated is not an issue. Notably, the GPU EIR assumed that the larger Merriam Mountain project would be built at that site, meaning that the GPU EIR assumed even greater traffic volumes in the area. The Project also will be required to pay fees in accordance with the Traffic Impact Fee program to mitigate any potential cumulative impacts to less than significant as required by the GPU EIR.

The minor issues raised in the comments concerning drainage control for the Project also were addressed. As the County’s Responses to Comments in the Staff Report show, those comments either were simply wrong as to the physical aspects of the Project, or minor changes were made to the site drainage plans to address the issues raised.

Finally, while the comments claimed that use of a septic system for the Project was improper, they did not identify how it would cause impacts that were peculiar to the Project or the parcel. In fact, the current commercial operation on the site uses a septic system because there is no sewer service in the general area. Also, the gas station/mini mart located across the freeway also uses a septic system to treat wastewater, as do other area facilities. Consequently,
there are no “peculiar” impacts from the Project’s use of a septic system. The Project’s septic system also will be designed, constructed, and operated in accordance with plans approved by the County Department of Environmental Health. Compliance with those development standards. That is another reason why any effects from using a septic system cannot be considered peculiar.

The Project also will be conditioned to require compliance with all applicable feasible GPU EIR mitigation measures, including for traffic, and cultural and biological resources. No further review of such impacts is required.

Additional comments may be submitted at the last moment challenging other aspects of the CEQA analysis of the Project. If so, those comments must specifically identify why an alleged impact is peculiar to the Project (a gas station/mini mart) or to the parcel where it will be built and show that the alleged impact was not addressed in the GPU EIR. Failure to provide evidence on those threshold requirements automatically disqualifies any such comments.

III. Conclusion

Public Resources Code § 21083.3 and CEQA Guideline § 15183 explicitly limit an agency’s CEQA analysis of any project that complies with a general plan that has been subject to environmental review. That is the case here. In enacting this provision of CEQA, the state legislature intended to and did set a high bar for challenges to a project that has been addressed in the comprehensive process involved in a local government’s approval of a general plan and its accompanying EIR.

For all the reasons stated above and in the Staff Report, the Project qualifies for such limited review and the CEQA review of this gas station/mini mart project to be located next to a freeway was more-than adequate. The Zoning Administrator should find that those provisions of CEQA apply to exempt the Project from further CEQA review because no impacts of the Project are peculiar and not addressed in the GPU EIR and compliance with any applicable mitigation measures required by the GPU EIR will be a condition of the Project.

Sincerely,

Walter Rusinek

Walter Rusinek

cc: Eugene Marini, KA Enterprises