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Bay Area Air District:



February 26, 2020

Stan Ketchum
City of Gilroy
7351 Rosanna Street
Gilroy, CA 95020

RE: City of Gilroy 2040 General Plan – Revised Notice of Preparation

Dear Mr. Ketchum,

Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Air District) staff has reviewed the revised Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the City of Gilroy's 2040 General Plan (Plan). The City intends to prepare a program EIR to evaluate the environmental issues associated with the adoption and buildout of the Plan.

Air District staff recommends the EIR include the following information and analysis:

The EIR should discuss how the Plan will address Senate Bill 1000 (SB 1000), the Planning for Healthy Communities Act. SB 1000, which became effective January 1, 2018, requires all California jurisdictions to consider environmental justice issues in their General Plans. Environmental justice (EJ), as defined by the State, focuses on disproportionate and adverse human health impacts that affect low income and minority communities already suffering from cumulative and legacy environmental and health impacts. SB 1000 requires local jurisdictions that identify disadvantaged communities within the area covered by the city's or county's general plan to adopt an EJ element or incorporate EJ goals and policies into other elements of the general plan. The Air District commends the City for initial efforts to actively engage with the community.

Although EJ is not directly analyzed in CEQA, the Air District encourages the City to assess the cumulative impacts of air pollutant and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the proposed buildout of the Plan by evaluating how these environmental impacts affect the City's identified Equity and Engagement Districts, given that these communities already face existing pollution burdens. Additionally, the City should focus on minimizing or

mitigating potential adverse impacts and risks as well as how the Plan could improve health conditions of the identified EJ communities. Air District staff encourage the City to consider involving representative expertise in the public health field, such as the County of Santa Clara Public Health Department, in the EIR review process.

- **The EIR should provide a detailed analysis of the Plan's potential effects on local and regional air quality.** The EIR should include a discussion on the Air District's attainment status for all criteria pollutants and the implications for the region if these standards are not attained or maintained by statutory deadlines. The Air District's CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, which provide guidance on how to evaluate a Plan's construction, operational, and cumulative air quality impacts, can be found on the Air District's website: <https://www.baaqmd.gov/plans-and-climate/california-environmental-quality-act-ceqa/updated-ceqa-guidelines>.
- **The GHG impact analysis should include an evaluation of the Plan's consistency with the most recent draft of the AB 32 Scoping Plan by the California Air Resources Board and with the State's 2030 and 2050 climate goals.** The Air District's current recommended GHG thresholds in our CEQA Guidelines are based on the State's 2020 GHG targets, which are now superseded by the 2030 GHG targets established in SB 32. The EIR should demonstrate how the Plan will be consistent with the Scoping Plan.
- **The EIR should estimate and evaluate the potential health risk to existing and future sensitive populations within and near the Plan area from toxic air contaminants (TAC) and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) as a result of the Plan's construction and operation.** Air District staff recommends that the EIR evaluate potential cumulative health risk impacts of TAC and PM_{2.5} emissions on sensitive receptors within and near the Plan area.
- **The EIR should identify and evaluate all Plan-level design features that reduce criteria pollutants, TACs, and GHGs to reduce potential impacts.** Chapter 9, Section 6, of the Air District's CEQA Air Quality Guidelines provides recommended mitigation measures and policies for general plans.
- **The EIR should evaluate the Plan's consistency with the Air District's 2017 Clean Air Plan (2017 CAP).** The EIR should discuss 2017 CAP measures relevant to the Plan and show the Plan's consistency with the measures. The 2017 CAP can be found on the Air District's website: <http://www.baaqmd.gov/plans-and-climate/air-quality-plans/current-plans>.
- **The Air District's CEQA website contains several tools and resources to assist lead agencies in analyzing air quality and GHG impacts.** These tools include guidance on quantifying local emissions and exposure impacts. The tools can be found on the Air District's website: <http://www.baaqmd.gov/plans-and-climate/california-environmental-quality-act-ceqa/ceqa-tools>. If the Plan requires a site-specific analysis, please contact Air District staff to obtain more recent data.

We encourage the City to contact Air District staff with any questions and/or to request assistance during the environmental review process. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Josephine Fong, Environmental Planner, at (415) 749-8637 or jfong@baaqmd.gov.

Sincerely,



Greg Nudd
Deputy Air Pollution Control Officer

cc: BAAQMD Director Margaret Abe-Koga
BAAQMD Vice Chair Cindy Chavez
BAAQMD Director Liz Kniss
BAAQMD Chair Rod G. Sinks