Notice of Preparation of Draft EIR – Notice of Public Scoping Meeting
ARB Southern California Consolidation Project

Date: August 1, 2016

To: State Clearinghouse, Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, Federal Agencies, Interested Parties, and Organizations

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report and Public Scoping Meeting for the California Air Resources Board Southern California Consolidation Project in Riverside, California

Contact: Patricia Kelly, Senior Environmental Planner
State of California Department of General Services
Real Estate Services Division, Project Management & Development Branch
707 Third Street, 4th Floor, MS509
West Sacramento, California 95605
(916) 376-1609

NOP Public Review Period: August 2, 2016, to September 1, 2016

Public Scoping Meeting: August 16, 2016 @ 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Purpose of the Notice

The California Air Resources Board (ARB), with assistance from the Department of General Services – Real Estate Services Division (DGS), is the lead agency and will prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the construction and operation of the ARB Southern California Consolidation Project (proposed project) described below.

This Notice of Preparation (NOP; 14 CCR 15082) is to inform responsible and trustee agencies and interested parties that ARB, with assistance from DGS, is preparing a Draft EIR for the proposed project. We are also seeking your views on the scope and content of the descriptions of the significant environmental issues and reasonable alternatives and mitigation measures to be explored in the Draft EIR.
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Background

The existing ARB motor vehicle and emissions testing and research facility in El Monte, California, also referred to as the Haagen-Smit Laboratory, began operations in 1971 and no longer meets ARB’s programmatic requirements under current air quality and climate change mandates. The existing state-owned property that ARB uses for motor vehicle and emissions testing is too small to accommodate construction of a sufficiently sized replacement facility; therefore, ARB is proposing to relocate and build a new state-of-the-art testing and research facility on land currently owned by the Regents of the University of California. The ownership of this land will be transferred to the State of California at essentially no cost.

Project Location

The proposed project site is located at 4001 Iowa Avenue on the University of California (UC), Riverside, West Campus, in the City of Riverside (see Figures 1 and 2). The site is 0.5 mile southwest of the Interstate (I-) 215/State Route (SR-) 60 freeway (from the University Avenue interchange). The approximately 18-acre project site is located on a portion of Assessor’s Parcel Number (APN) 253-080-013. The site is located in the University Neighborhood area of Riverside and is about 2 miles from downtown Riverside.

The approximately 18-acre project site is relatively flat and supports academic agricultural operations (primarily orange and avocado groves); no structures currently exist on site.

Project Description

The proposed project would involve construction of a new motor vehicle and emissions testing and research facility that would meet today’s work and safety standards and be adequately sized to meet mandated air quality and climate change requirements. Development of this facility would include site preparation and construction of multiple buildings, site ingress/egress onto Iowa Avenue and possibly Cranford Avenue. The proposed facility will support approximately 415–460 employees, including field-testing technicians, engineers, researchers, and administrative personnel. The proposed facility would be approximately 300,000 square feet, comprising approximately 160,200 square feet of testing space, 48,000 square feet of chemistry lab, and 91,100 square feet of office/administrative space. In addition, approximately 144,000 square feet of surface parking will be available to accommodate the 415–460 employees and the public. Approximately 126,500 square feet of outside facilities for secure parking and other vehicular storage needs are also proposed. The building(s) could be from one to four stories in height. The project may include photovoltaic panels, emergency diesel generator(s), and other
technologies to produce electricity. In addition, the facility may include energy storage systems, for example thermal energy storage tank(s) for chilled water and electrical battery storage. The new facility will be designed to handle the testing and ingress/egress requirements of large vehicles such as industrial equipment and large haul trucks. The facility will be affixed with an HVAC system that will accommodate the ventilation needs of the offices and the emission testing floors. The facility will generally operate from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Improvements to Iowa Avenue and possibly Cranford Avenue would be made to accommodate the increased traffic associated with the project and the diversity of motorized vehicles transporting to/from the facility for testing. Pipelines would be extended from the City of Riverside’s water line(s) to supply domestic, landscape, and fire water services to the site. The City’s existing sewer pipeline would be extended to accommodate the anticipated wastewater flows from the site. Connections would be made to the City of Riverside’s electrical, storm drainage, and fiber-optic systems. Connections would be made to AT&T phone lines and Southern California Gas Company gas lines.

The existing Haagen-Smit Laboratory, at 9528 Telstar Avenue, in El Monte, California, will be decommissioned within a reasonable amount of time to allow for future use as a state-owned surplus building. If the state determines there is no other state use for the property, the property would be included in the annual omnibus surplus legislation and, upon enactment, would be sold under California Government Code section 11011 et seq. The five leased buildings adjacent to the Haagen-Smit Laboratory and the space occupied at the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) Facilities at 470 Bauchet Street in Los Angeles would be terminated upon opening of the proposed facility. Under the owner’s interest, these existing leased spaces would be converted to an alternative, yet-to-be-determined use, at a future time.

**Potential Environmental Effects**

The Draft EIR will evaluate potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. The Draft EIR will propose mitigation to avoid and/or reduce impacts deemed potentially significant, identify reasonable alternatives, and compare the environmental impacts of the alternatives to the impacts of the proposed project. ARB has elected to proceed directly to preparing a Draft EIR and not prepare an initial study as allowed by the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15063).

Potential issues and impacts to the existing environment to be analyzed in the Draft EIR include the following environmental topics:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
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- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Paleontological Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards/Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems

The Draft EIR will also discuss the cumulative impacts of the proposed project in combination with other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects in the area. (14 CCR 15130).

The Draft EIR will describe and evaluate the comparative merits of a reasonable range of alternatives to the proposed project that could reasonably accomplish most of the basic project objectives and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant impacts (14 CCR 15126.6). The Draft EIR will also analyze the “No Project Alternative” and will identify the environmentally superior alternative. The EIR will also briefly describe and explain any alternatives that were eliminated from detailed consideration. The alternatives to be analyzed will be developed during the environmental review process and will consider input received during the public scoping process.

Comments provided in response to the NOP and during the scoping meeting, and ensuing analyses, may identify additional environmental resources to be evaluated.

Public Scoping Meeting

A public scoping meeting will be held by ARB in coordination with DGS at the date and location listed below. The purpose of the scoping meeting is to present information about the proposed project, describe ARB’s process and timelines, and solicit input, including written comments, on the scope and content of the Draft EIR.

Tuesday, August 16, 2016, at 6:00 p.m.
Center for Environmental Research & Technology, University of California, Riverside,
1084 Columbia Avenue, Riverside, California 92507
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Interested parties, including public agencies, are encouraged to attend the meeting to learn more about the proposed project and the environmental review process, and to express any concerns about the proposed project and offer suggestions regarding the environmental impacts, including any mitigation measures and alternatives.

The public scoping meeting information has also been published in local newspapers and the following website for the environmental review process: www.dudek.com/SoCalConsolidationCEQA.

Providing Comments

At this time, ARB is soliciting comments on the NOP regarding your views on how the project may affect the environment. This information will be considered when preparing the Draft EIR’s discussion of environmental topics, significant effects, mitigation measures, and alternatives. Because of time limits mandated by state law, comments should be provided no later than September 1, 2016, by 5:00 p.m. (30-day comment period).

You may submit comments in a variety of ways: (1) by U.S. mail, (2) by electronic mail (email), or (3) by attending a public scoping meeting and submitting written comments at that time. Comments provided by email should include “ARB Southern California Consolidation Project NOP Scoping Comments” in the subject line, and the name and physical address of the commenter should be contained in the body of the email.

Please send all comments via mail to:

Patricia Kelly, California Department of General Services, RESD, PMDB
c/o Dudek
605 Third Street
Encinitas, California 92024

OR via email to:

SoCalConsolidation@dudek.com
(subject line: “ARB Southern California Consolidation Project NOP Scoping Comments”)

All comments on environmental issues received during the public comment period will be considered and addressed in the Draft EIR, which is anticipated to be available for public review in late 2016.
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Location of Documents Available for Public Review

A hard copy of the NOP is available for review at the locations listed in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of California, Riverside Library</td>
<td>900 University Avenue Riverside, California 92521</td>
<td>951.827.1012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverside Main Library</td>
<td>3581 Mission Inn Avenue Riverside, California 92501</td>
<td>951.826.5201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverside Public Library, Eastside Branch</td>
<td>4033-C Chicago Avenue Riverside, California 92507</td>
<td>951.826.2235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Monte Public Library</td>
<td>3224 Tyler Avenue El Monte, California 91731</td>
<td>626.444.9506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California Department of General Services</td>
<td>707 Third Street, 4th Floor, Suite 401 West Sacramento, California 95605</td>
<td>916.376.1609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California Air Resources Board</td>
<td>9480 Telstar Avenue, Suite 4 El Monte, California 91731</td>
<td>626.350.6428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California Air Resources Board</td>
<td>1001 I Street, Visitor Center Sacramento, California 95814</td>
<td>916.322.2384</td>
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The NOP and all public review documents for this project will also be available for review online at [www.dudek.com/SoCalConsolidationCEQA](http://www.dudek.com/SoCalConsolidationCEQA).

Please contact Patricia Kelly if you have any questions about the environmental review process for the ARB Southern California Consolidation Project at the contact information provided at the beginning of this NOP.

Respectfully,

Alice Stebbins
Chief, Administrative Services Division
California Environmental Protection Agency
Air Resources Board
1001 I Street, 20th Floor
Sacramento, California 95814
FIGURE 1
Regional Vicinity Map

Haagen-Smit Laboratory (existing ARB El Monte facility)
Metro Transit Authority (ARB heavy-duty testing facility)
Iowa Avenue Site (proposed project site)
County Limits
City

Los Angeles County
Orange County
Riverside County
San Bernardino County

ARB Southern California Consolidation Project NOP