

Air District Update to the CEQA Thresholds of Significance

Proposed Thresholds for Evaluating the Significance of Climate Impacts From Land Use Projects and Plans

Public Workshop #2
March 10, 2022



BAY AREA
AIR QUALITY
MANAGEMENT
DISTRICT

How to Use Zoom

Black menu bar at top or bottom of screen:



Audio

Please mute yourself when not speaking

Video

Participants

- See others
- Rename yourself (Name and Group/Agency Affiliation if applicable)
- Raise hand (remember to lower)

Chat Feature

To provide questions and or comments when chat is enabled

Reaction

Raise hand, give thumbs up or applaud

Virtual Participation Principles

One person speaks at a time

Please mute when not speaking

Respect all opinions

Agenda



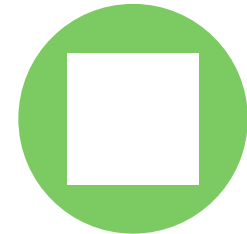
INTRODUCTIONS
& WELCOME



PRESENTATION



DISCUSSION &
QUESTIONS



CLOSING &
NEXT STEPS



Poll

- Who is in the Zoom-room?



Objectives

- Present the updated proposed Thresholds for Evaluating the Significance of Climate Impacts From Land Use Projects and Plans
- Share information on the Draft Justification Report
- Receive feedback, allow for discussion, answer questions





Proposed Thresholds for Evaluating the Significance of Climate Impacts From Land Use Projects and Plans

PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- What is driving the update
- Land use project thresholds
- Plan-level thresholds
- Draft Justification Report
- Timeline/Next Steps

Air District Roles in CEQA

The Air District acts as a:

- **Lead agency** when it has the primary authority to implement or approve a project.
- **Responsible agency** when it has limited discretionary authority over a portion of a project.
- **Commenting agency** when it has concerns about the air quality or greenhouse gas impacts of a proposed project.

The Air District supports lead agencies with CEQA by:

- Establishing recommended **thresholds** of significance for air quality and greenhouse gas emissions
- Providing **guidance** on methodology and best practices
- Developing **tools** to assist practitioners with the analysis



What is driving this CEQA Thresholds update?

Things have changed since we adopted the 2010 thresholds...

- New State GHG Targets
 - AB 32's 2020 targets replaced by SB 32
 - 2017 Scoping Plan sets 2030 targets
- EO B-55-18: Carbon neutrality as soon as possible; no later than 2045
- Local governments are asking us to update our GHG thresholds to support their planning
- Evolving case law



Proposed Thresholds for Land Use Projects (Buildings & Transportation)



Proposed Thresholds for Land Use Projects

Must include A or B:

A. Projects must include, at a minimum, the following project design elements:

1) Buildings

a) The project will not include natural gas appliances or natural gas plumbing (in both residential and nonresidential development).

b) The project will not result in any wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary energy usage as determined by the analysis required under CEQA Section 21100(b)(3) and Section 15126.2(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

B. Be consistent with a local GHG Reduction Strategy that meets the criteria under the CEQA Guidelines section 15183.5(b) C.



Proposed Thresholds for Land Use Projects (continued)

Must include A or B (continued):

A. Projects must include, at a minimum, the following project design elements

2) Transportation

- a) Achieve compliance with electric vehicle requirements in the most recently adopted version of CALGreen Tier 2.
- b) Achieve a reduction in project-generated vehicle miles traveled (VMT) below the regional average consistent with the current version of the California Climate Change Scoping Plan (currently 15 percent) or meet a locally adopted Senate Bill 743 VMT target, reflecting the recommendations provided in the Governor's Office of Planning and Research's Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA:
 - i. Residential projects: 15 percent below the existing VMT per capita
 - ii. Office projects: 15 percent below the existing VMT per employee
 - iii. Retail projects: no net increase in existing VMT

B. Be consistent with a local GHG Reduction Strategy that meets the criteria under the CEQA Guidelines section 15183.5(b) C.



Proposed Thresholds for Plans

Must include A or B:

- A. Meets State's goals to reduce emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2045
- B. Be consistent with a local GHG reduction strategy that meets the criteria under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5(b).



Draft Justification Report

- Lays out the Air District’s framework for analyzing climate impacts under CEQA – in order to have a less than significant climate impact:
 - Land use projects must be built so they can be carbon neutral by 2045
 - Community-wide plans must guide community to being carbon neutral by 2045
- Thresholds for land use development projects
 - Determining a project’s “Fair Share” in achieving State’s climate goals
 - How the four design elements connect to the State’s 2030 and 2045 climate goals
- Thresholds for community-wide planning documents
 - Highlights importance of adopting local climate action plans



Draft Justification Report

- Draft Justification Report available at: <https://www.baaqmd.gov/plans-and-climate/california-environmental-quality-act-ceqa/updated-ceqa-guidelines>
- Public Comment Period – February 16 to March 18, 2022
- Submit comments via email to ceqa@baaqmd.gov

OR:

- Send Comments to: Abby Young, Planning and Climate Protection Division, 375 Beale Street, Suite 600, San Francisco, CA 94105



Timeline & Next Steps



Public Workshop #2 – March 10, 2022



Draft Justification Report Comment Period –
February 16 to March 18, 2022



Air District Mobile Source and Climate Impacts
Committee Meeting – March 24, 2022



Air District Board Hearing – April 2022

Discussion & Questions

