February 12, 2015

SENT VIA EMAIL ONLY

Mr. Tony Stewart, AICP
Community Development Director
City of Galt Community Development Department
495 Industrial Drive
Galt, CA 95632

Proposed City of Galt Development Code, Zoning Map Amendment and Landscape Design Guidelines (SAC201401514)

Dear Mr. Stewart:

Thank you for providing the City of Galt’s Proposed Development Code, Zoning Map Amendment and Landscape Design Guidelines to the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD) for review. SMAQMD is required by law to “represent the citizens of the Sacramento district in influencing the decisions of other public and private agencies whose actions may have an adverse impact on air quality within the Sacramento district.” SMAQMD staff’s cursory comments are being provided in that spirit.

1. Bicycle parking requirements (18.48.070) should at a minimum meet the Cal Green Code requirements (www.iccsafe.org/cs/codes/Errata/State/CA/5570S133.pdf, section 5.106.4). Additionally, the City of Oakland’s code offers a good example of bicycle parking requirements (www.municode.com/library/ca/oakland/codes/planning_code?nodeId=TIT17PL_CH17.1178IPARE).

2. General Plan Circulation Element, Policy 4.2 directs the City to revise the zoning ordinance’s parking standards to establish parking allowances that encourage alternative modes of transportation and discourage wasteful over-abundance of parking. SMAQMD recommends the City consider highlighting this policy in the downtown parking requirements (18.28.070.05) in one of two ways:
   a. Address parking on a project basis through Design Review rather than providing prescriptive requirements, or
   b. Develop a downtown parking master plan and allow project proponents the option to pay an in lieu parking fee to the City so the City could provide the desired parking that best serves the downtown districts.

3. Since Galt utilizes the County of Sacramento’s street standards, how will the complete streets and alternative transportation mode policies in the General Plan (Circulation Element, Goal 6, Policies 1-11 and Goal 8, Policies 1-8) be implemented through Galt’s development code?

1 California Health and Safety Code §40961
4. The Landscape Standards (18.52) and Landscape Design Guidelines should clearly implement the General Plan’s Community Character Element Policy 4.2, incorporating a low VOC emitting tree mix in new development projects. Currently there is no reference to air quality improvements through tree selection or low VOC emitting trees or to the Sacramento Tree Foundation’s Greenprint Tree Guide (http://www.sactree.com/assets/STF%20Greenprint%20Booklet.pdf).

5. There are a few SMAQMD rules that Galt should consider referencing in the Development Code since they are noted in the code and are important for residents and businesses:
   a. Development Code section 18.16.060 B. 3. pertaining to special development requirements for wood stoves in the residential zoning districts - SMAQMD Rule 417 also pertains to the legal installation of wood burning appliances.
   b. Development Code section 18.28.130.07 pertaining to demolition permits in the downtown zoning district – SMAQMD Rule 902 also pertains to requirements for demolition activities as it pertains to asbestos materials.

6. SMAQMD recommends Galt consider including “toxic best practices” in its Development Code that would reduce air pollution exposure from transit corridor emissions (highway and railroad) in support of the General Plan’s Land Use Element Polices 1.14 and 10.1 to ensure protection of residents, visitors and workers from the health effects of water and air pollution and that no part of the community suffers disproportionately from adverse human health or environmental effects of land use decisions. SMAQMD staff is available to further discuss this concept and potential best practices.

Please contact Ms. Karen Huss at 916-874-4881 or khuss@airquality.org if you have any questions or would like to discuss these comments in more detail. I’m hopeful that in the future, the City of Galt will provide more than a week to review such a large and important development document.

Sincerely,

Larry Robinson
Land Use and Transportation Program Coordinator

Cc: Karen Huss, SMAQMD