

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING
ZONING INFORMATION FILE**

ZI NO. 2427

FREEWAY ADJACENT ADVISORY NOTICE

Effective: September 17, 2018

Council District: Citywide, within 1,000 feet of freeways

PURPOSE

Air pollution studies indicate a strong link between the chronic exposure of populations to vehicle exhaust and particulate matter from roads and freeways and elevated risk of adverse health impacts, particularly in sensitive populations such as young children and older adults. Areas located within 500 feet of a freeway¹ are known to experience the greatest concentrations of fine and ultrafine particulate matter (PM), a pollutant implicated in asthma and other health conditions. In 2003, the California Legislature enacted SB 352, which precludes the siting of public schools within 500 feet of a freeway, unless it can be shown that any significant health risk can be mitigated.

Freeways are a major stationary source of air pollution and their impact on the air we breathe and public health in cities continues to be a subject of public health research. Scientific literature previously focused on impacts to immediately surrounding communities within 500 feet of freeways; however, recent studies have established strong links to negative health outcomes affecting sensitive populations at a distance of 1,000 feet from freeways, (and in some instances, up to one mile). Therefore, the Department of City Planning is using the 1,000 feet boundary, as the distancing threshold, for conservative consideration of risk to the negative effects of air pollution caused by freeway proximity.

INSTRUCTIONS

All applicants filing a discretionary application, with the Department of City Planning, for a new and/or expanded project located within 1,000 feet of a freeway shall be advised of the following information and expectations.

PROJECT FEATURES AND DESIGN ALTERNATIVES TO CONSIDER:

When integrated into the project design and program concept, the following measures may reduce air pollution exposure and associated health risks, and therefore, should be taken into account when your project is being configured or when a specific site is being considered for development.

1. Avoid locating the following sensitive uses within the project: schools, day care facilities and senior care centers.

¹ Freeway, as defined in the Caltrans Highway Design Manual – Chapter 60, pg. 60-2: (May 7, 2012)
“Freeway--A divided arterial highway with full control of access and with grade separations at intersections.”

2. Locate occupied open space areas (play areas, courtyards, patios, balconies, etc.) as far from the freeway sources as possible when the size of the site permits.
3. Prioritize the location of non-habitable uses, such as parking structures and building areas not calculated in floor area, nearest the freeway.
4. Screen the project site with substantial vegetation and/or a wall barrier.

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

All projects seeking discretionary approval for which findings must be made regarding conformance to the General Plan are expected to adhere to the Citywide Design Guidelines, including those that address freeway proximity.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Existing Adopted Policies Addressing Impacts of Air Quality

The City's General Plan already contains adopted policies addressing health-based risks and outcomes. Below are a few that are directly related to freeways.

Air Quality Element Policy 4.3.1: Revise the City's General Plan/Community Plans to ensure that new or related sensitive receptors are located to minimize significant health risks posed by air pollution sources.

Housing Element Policy 4.1.9: Whenever possible, assure adequate health-based buffer zones between new residential and emitting industries.

Housing Element Policy 2.1.2: Establish standards that enhance health outcomes.

Plan for Healthy LA Policy 1.5 - Plan for Health: Improve Angelenos' health and well-being by incorporating a health perspective into land use, design, policy, and zoning decisions through existing tools, practices, and programs.

Plan for Healthy LA Policy 5.2 – People: Reduce negative health impacts for people who live and work in close proximity to industrial uses and freeways through health promoting land uses and design solutions.

Plan for Healthy LA Policy 5.4 - Noxious activities: Protect communities' health and well-being from exposure to noxious activities (for example, oil and gas extraction) that emit odors, noise, toxic, hazardous, or contaminant substances, materials, vapors, and others.

Plan for Healthy LA Policy 5.7 - Land use planning for public health and GHG emission reduction: Promote land use policies that reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions, result in improved air quality and decreased air pollution, especially for children, seniors and others susceptible to respiratory diseases.

Adopted Ordinance Addressing Impacts of Air Quality

As part of the Clean Up Green Up initiative, on April 26, 2016, City Council amended Articles 5 and 9 of Chapter IX of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (L.A.M.C.) addressing sources of outside air in buildings and requiring all new mechanically ventilated buildings located within 1,000 feet of the freeway to install air filtration media that provides a Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) of 13 (Ordinance 184245).