

**DRAFT FINDINGS AND ORDER OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
PROJECT NO. R2011-01290-(5)
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 201100120**

1. **ENTITLEMENT REQUESTED.** The applicant, the Quartz Hill Water District (“District”), is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (“CUP”) to authorize the establishment and authorization of a Development Program to authorize the construction, operation, and maintenance of a public utility service yard and public utility service center in the C-3-DP zone pursuant to Los Angeles County (“County”) Code Sections 22.28.180, 22.28.210 and 22.40.030. The project also includes a Zone Change request to change the zoning of the 4.8-acre subject property from R-1-7,500 (Single Family Residence – 7,500 Square Foot Minimum Required Lot Area) zone to C-3-DP (Unlimited Commercial – Development Program) zone.
2. **HEARING DATE.** August 27, 2013.
3. **PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS.**
4. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION.** The applicant, the District, proposes to construct, operate, and maintain an operations building and maintenance facility on an approximately 4.8-acre site in Quartz Hill. The facility will be comprised of both a Public Utility Service Center (normally a permitted use in the C-3 zone) and a Public Utility Service Yard (a use subject to permits in the C-3 zone). A Public Utility Service Center (“Service Center”) is defined in the County Code as a location used for the administration of public utilities, not including warehouses or storage yards. A Public Utility Service Yard (“Service Yard”) is defined as a location used for office, warehouse, storage yard, or maintenance garage of a public utility. In more detail the Service Center will house the following functions:
 - A SCADA (Supervisory and Data Acquisition) system. This system monitors all water flows and the District’s water distribution and storage.
 - A Water Quality Laboratory. This laboratory will maintain water quality parameters.
 - Real time monitoring of the District’s facilities.

The Service Yard will be used as a warehouse to store the District’s materials and equipment.

The facility will be housed in a 31,194-square-foot (approximately 100-foot-by-299-foot) maximum two-story building designed in a western-frontier ranch style. The building will contain three main components: (1) an operations center housing a public counter, offices, conference rooms and the District’s board room; (2) a storage/warehouse area comprising 7,335 square feet; and (3) a vehicle and equipment parking area comprising 15,000 square feet. Parking for 59 vehicles, including three disabled-accessible spaces, will be provided in front for customers and employees. Ingress and egress to the site will be provided by two new (52-

and 30-foot) driveways accessing Avenue L and one 26-foot-wide driveway off of 50th Street West.

5. **LOCATION.** The project site is located on Avenue L west of 50th Street West in the Fifth Supervisorial District and within the Quartz Hill Zoned District. The Assessor's Parcel Numbers are 3102-026-902, 3102-026-903, 3102-026-904, and 3102-026-905.
6. **SITE PLAN DESCRIPTION.** The site plan depicts the subject property with a new building measuring approximately 100 feet by 300 feet. The building is divided into three areas: (1) an operations center measuring 6,194 square feet, (2) a storage/warehouse facility measuring 7,335 square feet, and (3) vehicle equipment and parking measuring 15,000 square feet. An additional 1,750 square feet is located in a second-story mezzanine in the operations center. Parking is depicted at the front and sides of the building, including parking for seven service trucks. A total of 13,695 square feet of landscaping is provided on site. Two new driveways (52 and 30 feet wide) accessing Avenue L and one 26-foot-wide driveway accessing 50th Street West are depicted.
7. **EXISTING ZONING.** The subject site is zoned R-1-7,500. The project proposes a zone change to C-3-DP. Surrounding properties are zoned as follows:

North: A-1-10,000 (Light Agricultural – 10,000 Square Feet Minimum Required Lot Area).
South: R-1-7,500
East: R-1-7,500, CPD (Commercial Planned Development)
West: R-1-7,500
8. **EXISTING LAND USES.** The subject site is vacant land. Surrounding properties are developed as follows:

North: Single-family residences, vacant land.
South: Single-family residences.
East: Vacant land, commercial structures.
West: Single-family residences.
9. **PREVIOUS CASES/ZONING HISTORY.**
Ordinance No. 6009 on July 8, 1952 established the R-A-10,000 (Residential Agricultural – 10,000 Square Feet Minimum Required Lot Area) zone on the subject property.
Ordinance No. 7183 on August 2, 1957 established the R-1-7,500 (Single Family Residence – 7,500 Square Feet Minimum Required Lot Area) zone on the subject property.
10. **GENERAL PLAN / COMMUNITY PLAN CONSISTENCY.** The project site is located within the "1" (Low Density Residential) land use category of the County

General Plan ("General Plan") and the U1 (Urban 1) and C (Community Commercial) land use categories of the Antelope Valley Areawide General Plan ("Community Plan"). The "1" designation is intended for large lot estates and typical suburban development with densities ranging from one to six dwelling units per gross acre. The "U1" designation is intended for residential uses from 1.1 to 3.3 dwelling units per acre, and the "C" designation is intended for retail sales most commonly found in shopping centers such as supermarkets, drug stores, small clothing stores, hardware stores and donut shops. However, the Community Plan allows for flexibility when permitting uses such as that applied for by the applicant as it states the following (Page VI-11):

Within the various land use classifications show on the Land Use Policy, there may be a variety of existing (or potential) sites devoted to open space, public or semi-public uses such as schools, churches, parks, flood control basins or channels, communication facilities and other similar community-serving uses. While every effort has been made to identify these uses on the Land Use Policy Map, it is the express intent of this Plan to permit, subject to an appropriate design review process involving the Regional Planning Commission and a finding of no significant negative impacts on the environment, the expansion of existing facilities, when appropriate and not in conflict with the existing and future land use patterns as shown on the Land Use Policy Map.

As the proposed use is a semi-public and community-serving use and the project has been before the Regional Planning Commission ("Commission") with a finding of no significant negative impact on the environment with mitigation (as concluded in the MND prepared by the District), it is consistent with the land use policies of the Community Plan to establish on the subject site. Furthermore, the proposed project will not be in conflict with the existing and future land uses patterns of the area as it will be designed in a manner compatible with other structures in the immediate community. Its architectural style is one that blends in well with the community and there is adequate distance between the building and surrounding residential land uses. Landscaping around the building will further soften and buffer the use from neighboring properties.

The following policies of the General Plan are applicable to the proposed project:

- *Policy 9: Promote neighborhood commercial facilities which provide convenience goods and services and complement community character through appropriate scale, design and locational controls.*

While not a conventional commercial establishment, the proposed facility will be a central place where Quartz Hill residents can pay their water bills, request District-related services and assistance, and attend District Board meetings. The facility is designed in a manner that will complement the Quartz Hill community and the immediate neighborhood.

The following policies of the Community Plan are applicable to the proposed project:

- *Land Use Policy 4: Accommodate population and land use growth in a “centralized,” rather than a uniformly “dispersed” pattern, providing for a broad range of densities and types of uses. Higher density and intensity uses will be structured at the “core” or “cores” of the community around which lower intensity uses will be grouped. Lowest density uses should be located at the periphery of the community.*

The District will centralize its facilities in a single location within the community of Quartz Hill. The proposed facility will be in an established area with existing development nearby. It will provide a convenient place where District customers can go conduct business and where the District can conduct its day-to-day activities. It will be built in an area considered a “core” by the Community Plan.

11. ZONING ORDINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS COMPLIANCE.

Pursuant to Section 22.28.220 of the County Code, establishments in the C-3 Zone are subject to the following development standards:

- Not more than 90 percent of the net area shall be occupied by buildings, with a minimum of 10 percent of the net area landscaped.
Buildings on the project site will not exceed 90 percent of the net area and 10 percent of the net area will be landscaped.
- That adequate parking be provided as required by Part 11 of Chapter 22.52.
Parking for 59 vehicles will be provided, which is adequate per Part 11 of Chapter 22.52

- 12. NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACT/LAND USE COMPATIBILITY.** The proposed facility is compatible with the community. By designing a building with a compatible architectural style and with a massing and bulk that is context sensitive, the new Service Center and Service Yard is appropriate for the immediate area. Its two-story design and frontier-western architectural style blends in well with the community. By centralizing many outdated and dispersed locations into a central facility, the community will benefit from a new state-of-the-art building that will allow the applicant to meet its mission while providing the community with a new asset.

13. COUNTY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

County Department of Public Works (“Public Works”)

Public Works recommends approval of this project and has recommended conditions of approval.

County Fire Department (“Fire Department”)

The Fire Department recommends approval of this project as the project will provide adequate fire access, water flow, and fire suppression technology.

County Department of Parks and Recreation (“Parks and Recreation”)

Parks and Recreation stated that the proposed project will not have impacts to its facilities.

County Department of Public Health (“Public Health”)

Public Health recommends approval of the proposed project with recommended conditions pertaining to construction and operational noise impacts.

14. **OTHER AGENCY COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.** No comments have been received.
15. **LEGAL NOTIFICATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH.** Pursuant to the provisions of Sections 22.60.174 and 22.60.175 of the County Code, the community was appropriately notified of the public hearing by mail, newspaper and property posting.
16. **PUBLIC COMMENTS.** No comments have been received.

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT SPECIFIC FINDINGS

17. The proposed use is consistent with the adopted general plan for the area as it is designated U1 and C in the Community Plan. The U1 designation permits residential uses from 1.1 to 3.3 dwelling units per acre, and the C designation permits commercial and retail uses. A zone change to C-3-DP will ensure that the zoning and land use designations are consistent with each other. Furthermore, the Community Plan allows for flexibility in permitting the type of use applied for by the applicant by allowing for public or semi-public uses within various land use classifications. The facility will be a community-serving use and its design has been reviewed and approved by the community.

Therefore, the proposed use will be consistent with the adopted general plan for the area.

18. The facility will be compatible with the surrounding uses. The project site is appropriate for the facility as it is able to accommodate the proposed building while keeping negative impacts to a minimum. The project has been designed so that work vehicles entering the site will travel to the rear of the property and the facility's garage and warehouse are located indoors, so no work will be performed outside and garage doors are closed at the end of the workday. The project will be further conditioned to limit noise-inducing activities to ensure compatibility with neighboring residences, except where needed in cases of emergency. The project site is appropriate for the facility as it is able to accommodate the proposed building while keeping negative impacts to a minimum.

Therefore, the requested use at the location proposed will not adversely affect the health, peace, comfort or welfare of persons residing or working in the surrounding area, will not be materially detrimental to the use, enjoyment or valuation of property of other persons located in the vicinity of the site, and will not jeopardize, endanger or otherwise constitute a menace to the public health, safety or general welfare.

19. The project site is 4.8 acres and easily accommodates all facilities, parking, landscaping, and all other development features. No variances from standards are

necessary. The offices for the District will be located in the front of the building, fronting West Avenue L while the garage and warehouse will be located at the rear, hidden away from public view. Landscaping will further aid in softening the facility's impact from neighboring uses.

Therefore, the proposed site is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the yards, walls, fences, parking and loading facilities, landscaping and other development features prescribed in Title 22, or as otherwise required in order to integrate said use with the uses in the surrounding area.

20. Access to the site is from Avenue L, a 60-foot-wide street, and 50th Street West, a 90-foot-wide street, which are sufficiently wide to accommodate the type and quantity of pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle traffic that would be generated by the project. All other services (electricity, telephone, gas, water) are proximate to the site.

Therefore, the proposed site is adequately served by highways or streets of sufficient width, and improved as necessary to carry the kind and quantity of pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle traffic such use would generate and other public or private service facilities as required.

21. The project site is located within a residential neighborhood with residences to the north, west and south of the subject property. The facility has been designed so that work vehicles entering the site will travel to the rear of the property. The warehouse and the facility's garage and warehouse are located within the structure. No work will be performed outdoors, and the garage doors are conditioned to be closed at the end of the workday. Furthermore, due to the proximity of the garage and warehouse uses to nearby residential uses, and to ensure the long-term compatibility of the facility with the residential neighborhood, the County Department of Public Health ("Public Health") found that restricting the noise levels for the facility during nighttime hours is necessary to protect the public. Except in cases of emergency, the project has been conditioned to comply with acceptable exterior noise levels for residential properties during nighttime hours, as determined by Public Health.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

22. The District is the Lead Agency for the project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"). The County is a Responsible Agency under CEQA, with permitting authority for the entitlements within the County. As Lead Agency, the District analyzed the environmental impacts of the project in a Mitigated Negative Declaration ("MND") (SCH No. 2012061084), which was certified by the District on July 26, 2012. The MND as prepared by the District includes Response to Comments dated July 26, 2012, and identifies mitigation measures to be implemented as part of the project.

23. The Board of Supervisors has reviewed and considered the MND and finds that it reflects the independent judgment of the County. As stated in the MND, identified impacts to cultural resources can be reduced to acceptable levels with the mitigation measures identified in the MND and incorporated as conditions in this grant.
24. A Mitigation Monitoring Program (“MMP”) consistent with the MND, has been prepared by the County, and its requirements have been incorporated into the conditions of approval for this project.
25. The MMP prepared in conjunction with the MND identifies in detail the manner in which compliance with the measures adopted to mitigation or avoid potential adverse impacts of the project to the environment is ensured.
26. **RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS.** The location of the documents and other materials constituting the record of proceedings upon which the Board of Supervisors’ decision is based in this matter is at the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, 13th Floor, Hall of Records, 320 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012. The custodian of such documents and materials shall be the Section Head of the Zoning Permits North Section, Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning.

BASED ON THE FOREGOING, THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CONCLUDES:

- A. That the proposed use will be consistent with the adopted general plan for the area; and
- B. That the requested use at the location proposed will not adversely affect the health, peace, comfort or welfare of persons residing or working in the surrounding area, will not be materially detrimental to the use, enjoyment or valuation of property of other persons located in the vicinity of the site, and will not jeopardize, endanger or otherwise constitute a menace to the public health, safety or general welfare; and
- C. That the proposed site is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the yards, walls, fences, parking and loading facilities, landscaping and other development features prescribed in this Title 22, of as is otherwise required in order to integrate said use with the uses in the surrounding area; and
- D. That the proposed site is adequately served by highways or streets of sufficient width and improved as necessary to carry the kind and quantity of pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle traffic such use would generate, and by other public or private service facilities as are required.

THEREFORE, the information submitted by the applicant and presented at the public hearing substantiates the required findings for a Conditional Use Permit as set forth in Section 22.56.090 and 22.16.110 of the Los Angeles County Code (Zoning Ordinance).

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ACTION:

1. The Board of Supervisors, having considered the Mitigated Negative Declaration together with any comments received during the public review process, finds on the basis of the whole record before the Board of Supervisors that there is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment as modified, finds that the Mitigated Negative Declaration reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the Board of Supervisors, and adopts the Mitigation Monitoring Program prepared by the County for the project.
2. In view of the findings of fact and conclusions presented above, Conditional Use Permit No. 201100120 is approved subject to the attached conditions.

SMT:amc
August 27, 2013

c: Zoning Enforcement, Building and Safety