



Date: October 31, 2023

To: Corvallis Planning Commission

From: Board of Directors  
League of Women Voters of Corvallis

Re: Creekside Center Development (PLD-2022-03/CDP-2022-06/SUB-2022-03)

In the League's earlier testimony, we emphasized our concerns about the Creekside Development's damaging effects on the Highly Protected Riparian Corridor and Significant Wetland. We also stated that there were compatibility issues locating a fueling station a very short distance from housing. In this memo, we will elaborate on why the fueling station in the Creekside Center planned development conflicts with Corvallis Comprehensive Plan Policies that address compatibility.

#### Article 1 – General Policies

- Sect. 1.1 Encourage only development that maintains and/or improves the existing quality of life of residents.
- Article 3 - General Land Use: All special developments, lot development options, intensifications, changes or modifications of nonconforming uses, Comprehensive Plan changes, and Zone changes shall be reviewed to assure compatibility with less intensive uses and potential uses on surrounding lands. Impacts of the following factors shall be considered:
  - 3.21 A. Preservation of significant open space and natural features
  - 3.26 C. Noise Attenuation and Odors and Emissions

A fueling station at this location is incompatible because

- **Gasoline fueling stations emit dangerous levels of the known carcinogens benzene and ozone, which causes respiratory problems and asthma.** Study results from Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health revealed that vapors from gas station vent pipes often emit ten times the amount of emissions than were used to determine setback regulations for playgrounds, public parks, and schools.<sup>1</sup> According to the National Institute of Health, studies have shown increased cases of acute childhood leukemia due to exposure to benzene and other hydrocarbons.<sup>2</sup>
- **Gasoline fueling stations leak toxins into nearby ground water and eventually into nearby streams.** Of the 450,000 hazardous brownfield sites in the US, the EPA reports that about half are contaminated by petroleum, with much of it coming from leaking underground tanks from old gas stations.<sup>3</sup> Even though new regulations have resulted in improved tanks, there is still leakage from malfunctioning equipment and spills.<sup>4</sup>

According to a June 2022 article in *The Guardian*, it has been predicted that 80% of gas stations will be unprofitable by 2035, and allowing new stations to be built is a bad investment for any city or county.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, Petaluma, California has prohibited the building of new gas stations, and other cities are considering similar action. In addition, including a gas station in the proposed development is not in keeping with Oregon's goal to reduce climate pollution from transportation fuels, as part of its work to implement the Oregon Climate Action Plan.

Again, the League of Women Voters of Corvallis hopes that the developer of the Creekside Center will be encouraged to submit a plan more suitable to this difficult site.

## REFERENCES

### 1. Gas Stations Vent Far More Toxic Fumes than Previously Thought

<https://www.publichealth.columbia.edu/news/gas-stations-vent-far-more-toxic-fumes-previously-thought>

### 2. Acute childhood leukemia and environmental exposure to potential sources of benzene and other hydrocarbons; a case-control study

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1763669/>

### 3. Petroleum Brownfields | US EPA

<https://www.epa.gov/ust/petroleum-brownfields>

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/jun/21/gas-stations-us-cities-fuel-prices>

### 4. Washington gas stations are leaking toxins into nearby groundwater

<https://crosscut.com/environment/2023/06/washington-gas-stations-are-leaking-toxins-nearby-groundwater>

### 5. Cities are banning new gas stations. More should join them

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/jun/21/gas-stations-us-cities-fuel-prices>

### Is It Safe to Live Near a Gas Station? Scientists Point to Numerous Health Hazards

<https://fossilfuel.com/is-it-safe-to-live-near-a-gas-station-scientists-point-to-numerous-health-hazards/>

### Residential Proximity to Petrol Stations and Risk of Childhood Leukemia

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10654-023-01009-0>

### Living Near a Gas Station

<https://www.blueridgeoutdoors.com/go-outside/living-near-a-gas-station/>

### Pollution from Gas Stations

<https://education.seattlepi.com/pollution-gas-stations-3472.html>