



**City Council
Study Session**

**19-1005 Proposed
Changes to the City's
Transportation Analysis
Methodology and
Processes to Comply with
State Law**

November 5, 2019



**City of
Santa Clara**
The Center of What's Possible

Study Session Goals

- Introduce Senate Bill 743 and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- Discuss Santa Clara's current method to study traffic for projects (CEQA and Operational)
- Introduce "Vehicle Miles Traveled" or VMT
- Understand Workplan and Schedule
- Receive Council and Community Feedback

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Agenda

- Background
- Senate Bill 743
- Level Of Service (LOS)
- Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)
- Research
- Workplan
- Next Steps & Q/A



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Background

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

- Government agencies to inform decision makers and the public about potential environmental impacts of proposed projects.
- Preparation of technical reports (i.e. Transportation, Noise, Air Quality, Historic Resources, etc.)
- Impacts and Mitigations
- CEQA process may require public review and input

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Background

City of Santa Clara 2010-2035 General Plan

- Reducing contribution to Greenhouse Gas emissions by encouraging alternative transportation modes, sustainable building practices and other energy efficiency measures.

Climate Action Plan (CAP)

- Implements the City's sustainability and environmental quality Goals and Policies

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Senate Bill 743

- 2013 - Legislation approved by Governor
- 2018 - New CEQA VMT Guidelines and Technical Advisory
- July - Deadline to adopt
2020 new transportation policy



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Senate Bill 743

New State Law that redefines the criteria for determining the significance of transportation environmental impacts

- Promote the reduction of GHG Emissions
- Development of multimodal transportation networks
- Diversity of Land Uses
- VMT the most appropriate measure



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Senate Bill 743

CEQA Goals

- Requires all California cities to replace Level of Service (LOS) to measure CEQA transportation impacts with a methodology like Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) by July 2020.
- Focuses on reducing drive alone travel, rather than congestion, as the measure of environmental impact.
- Encourages diversified/mixed-use development along transit corridors.
- Aligns with City's Climate Action Plan Goals.



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Additional Transportation Operational Analysis (Non-CEQA)

- Access and Circulation
- Traffic signal warrant studies
- Traffic calming
- Parking
- Pedestrian, Bicycle and Transit



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Level of Service (LOS)

Current Method

- Measures congestion levels at signalized intersections
- Weekday and Peak Hour
- LOS grade "A" through "F" to indicate levels of congestion (delay)
- Mitigation can require roadway widening
- Facilitates vehicle traffic



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LOS Examples



Intersection Operation: Free Flow
Degree of Delay: Negligible Delays



Intersection Operation: Stable Flow
Degree of Delay: Minimal Delays

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LOS Examples



Intersection Operation: Stable Flow
Degree of Delay: Moderate Delays



Intersection Operation: Less Stable Flow
Degree of Delay: Long Delays

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LOS Examples



Intersection Operation: Unstable Flow

Degree of Delay: Substantial Delays Can Occur



Intersection Operation: Unpredictable Flow/Wait Through Multiple Cycles

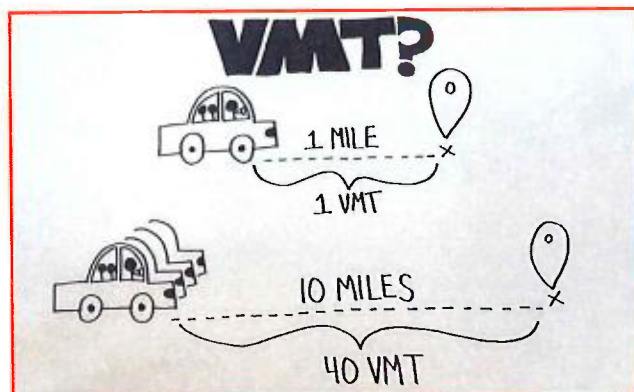
Degree of Delay: Excessive Delays Can Occur

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What is VMT?

- A “Vehicle Mile Traveled” is the **distance** (in miles) that a driver travels from point A to point B.



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Total Project VMT

- For CEQA, measure total daily VMT:
 - Weekday
 - All trips in day



$$1.1 \text{ MILES} + 1.9 \text{ MILES} + 2.2 \text{ MILES} = 5.2 \text{ VMT}$$

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VMT

Goals:

- Reduce driving alone
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions

Characteristics:

- Lower VMT:
 - Transit corridors
 - Diverse/dense land uses
 - Multimodal options available
- Higher VMT:
 - No available transit
 - No diversity of land use
 - Suburban areas



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Future Policy/Procedures Considerations

- Define new “significant impact” threshold for CEQA VMT Impacts
- Project VMT vs. VMT Goals
- Project VMT Impacts and Mitigations
- LOS in Operational Analysis
- Establish New Procedures

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Research

Cities Who Implemented VMT

- Pasadena
- San Francisco
- Oakland
- San Jose
- Los Angeles
- Sacramento



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Research

Cities Who Implemented VMT

Common Issues/Concerns:

- Parking
- Lack of transit ridership
- Less transportation investment
- Intersection LOS analysis



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VTA Coordination

- Congestion Management Agency
- Working with all Member Agencies
- Promote Consistency between Cities
- Technical Support
- Modeling and Mapping
- VMT Evaluation Tool



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Workplan

- Phase I Outreach
- Phase II Engagement
- Phase III Technical Evaluation
- Phase IV Circulate Draft Policy
- Phase V Approval Process



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Outreach

- 8/26/19 City Manager's Blog
- 8/26/19 Launch VMT Webpage
- 10/24/19 Northside Library Community Meeting
- 10/30/19 Central Library Community Meeting
- 11/05/19 City Council Study Session
- 11/13/19 Planning Commission Study Session

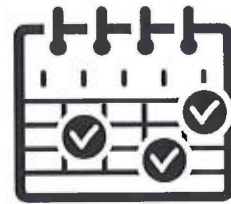


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Next Steps

- November/December – Continue Outreach, Staff analysis
- November – Developer/Consultant Outreach
- January – Draft Policy
- February – Community Outreach, CC/PC Study Session
- Spring 2020 – Planning Commission hearing
- Mid 2020 – City Council hearing



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Questions and Feedback

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LOS vs VMT

Level of Service (LOS)	vs	Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)
Total # of vehicles at intersections		Total # of vehicle miles generated
LOS during peak hour only		VMT for all day
Focus on automobile travel		Focus on all travel
Improves vehicle capacity		Improves ped, bike, and transit access
Facilitates driving		Promotes other transportation options
Can encourage development in suburban areas		Encourages development along transit in urban areas
Can increase greenhouse gas emissions		Focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions

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