



# Planning Commission

June 4, 2020

**SB 743 Implementation-Adoption of Vehicle Miles  
Traveled Guidelines**

**Application No. 2004-29**

## Adoption of Updated Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) Guidelines

- Establishes Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) as the method for determining transportation impacts, for environmental purposes
  - Delineates LA County as the “region” for comparative purposes
- Replaces vehicular Level of Service (LOS) as the primary method for analyzing transportation impacts under CEQA
- Implements State law
  - SB 743, approved in 2013, CEQA streamlining legislation
  - Aims to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions by facilitating urban infill development
- State law mandates use of VMT methodology starting July 1, 2020.
- Closely follows guidance from State Office of Planning and Research for setting thresholds of significance
- Aligns with updated General Plan and draft Climate Action & Adaptation Plan

# Proposed CEQA Guidelines

## Two Major Components:

- Establish **VMT** screening criteria and significance thresholds for three main categories of projects **for CEQA purposes**
  - Development Projects (housing, office, retail, mixed use, etc.)
  - Land Plans (General Plans, Specific Plans, Master Plans, etc.)
  - Transportation Projects (roadway projects, bike lanes, rail projects, bus only lanes, etc.)
- Establish criteria for **LOS** analysis **through the development review process**
  - May result in conditions of approval to address vehicular circulation on and near project site
  - LOS cannot be used for CEQA impact determination or mitigation
  - Does not require full vehicle congestion remedy

# Other CEQA Significance Criteria

## Other factors that can trigger CEQA Impact

- If it conflicts with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?
- If it substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible use (e.g., farm equipment)?
- If it results in inadequate emergency access?

## The Move to VMT Analysis...

- Represents a shift away from prioritizing the flow of vehicles
  - Removes roadway and intersection level of service and delay as an environmental impact
  - Focuses on reducing commute distances and total vehicle travel
- Removes barriers to urban infill projects
- Encourages more sustainable, compact development patterns
- Aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality
- Prioritizes multimodal mitigation measures over vehicular roadway improvements



# Background: Alignment with Draft City CAAP

## Long Beach 2015 Production Inventory Emissions at a Glance

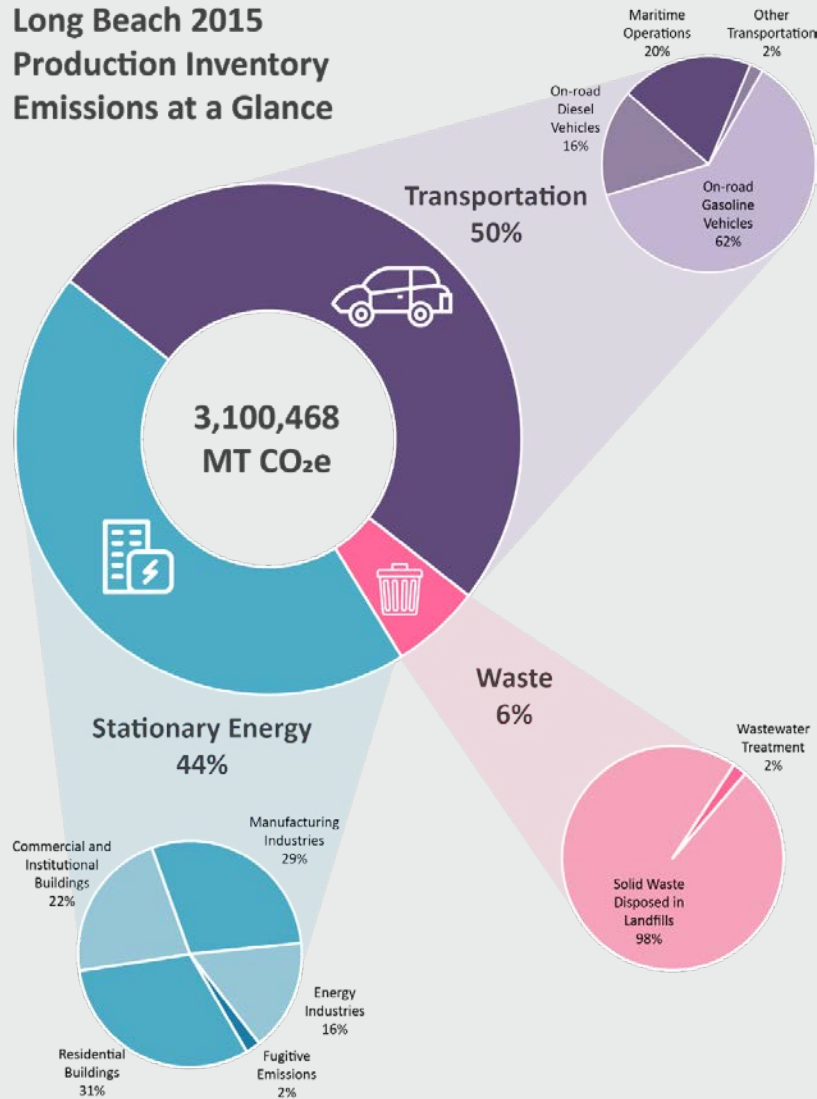
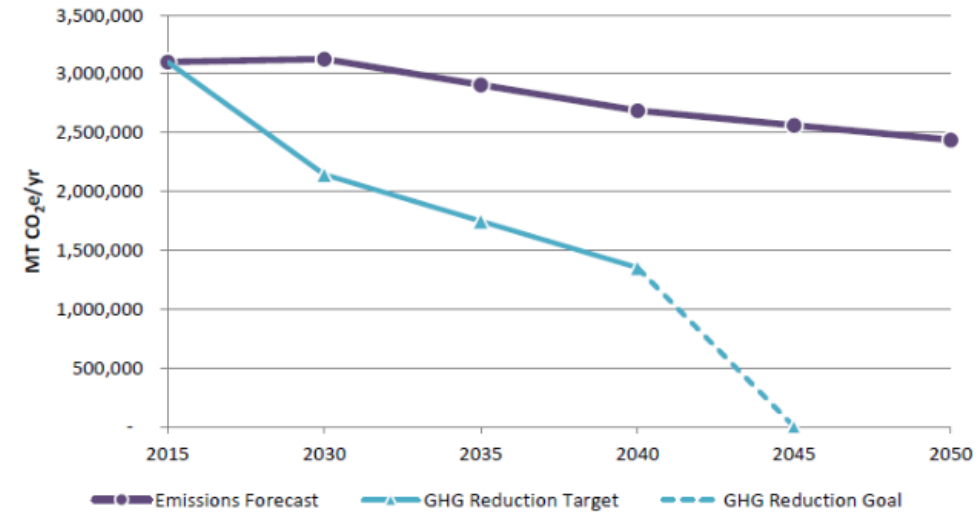


Figure 9: Emissions Targets vs. Forecasts 2015-2050



## Draft CAAP Actions Aimed at VMT Reduction:

- T2: Increase employment and residential development along primary transit corridors
- T-7: Update the Transportation Demand Management Ordinance
- T-8: Increase density and mixing of land uses
- T9: Integrate SB 743 planning with CAAP process

# Background: Long Beach Vehicle Travel Patterns

## Total Trip Origins and Destinations

- 82% of total trips to and from Long Beach are contained within Los Angeles County
  - 41% originate in and destined for Long Beach
  - 21% originate in or are destined for neighboring Gateway cities
  - 20% are to or from the rest of LA County
- The remaining trips—18%
  - 17% either originate in or are destined for Orange County
  - 1% of Long Beach trips have a trip end in other counties in the SCAG region or beyond

# Development Projects: Screening Criteria

Project Type/ Land Use	Presumption of Less Than Significant
Small Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Generating fewer than 50 peak hour trips (or 500 average daily trips)</li></ul>
Residential and Office in Low VMT Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Located in Low VMT Areas</li><li>• Project characteristics determined to be similar to surrounding development</li></ul>
Projects within ½ mile of High-Quality Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overall FAR of more than .75:1</li><li>• Parking equal to or less than Code-required</li><li>• Is consistent with the LUE or SCAG RTP/SCS</li><li>• Does not Replace affordable residential units with a smaller number of moderate- or high-income residential units</li></ul>
Other Land Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Retail of 50,000 square feet or less (neighborhood-serving)</li><li>• 100% Affordable Housing Projects</li></ul>
Institutional/ Government and Public Service Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• VMT is accounted for in the existing regional average</li><li>• Screened from subsequent CEQA VMT analysis</li></ul>

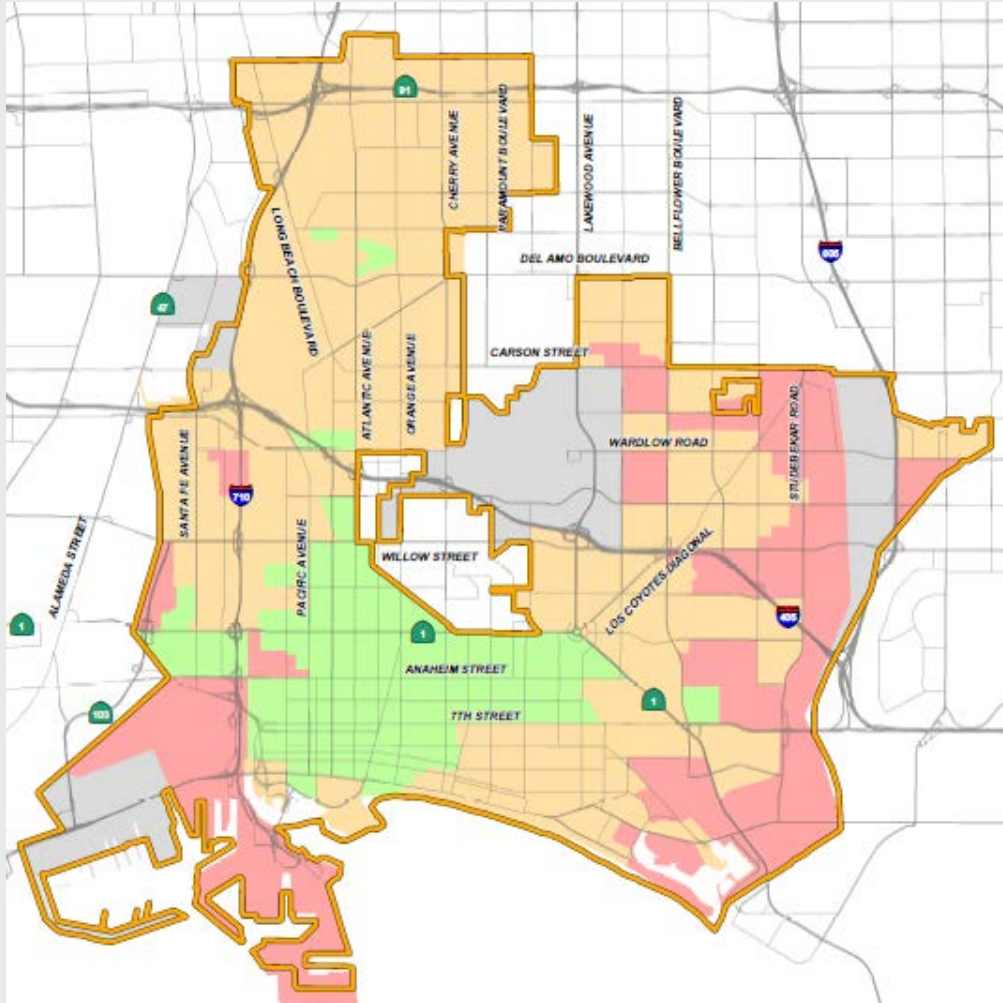


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Other Land Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Retail of 50,000 square feet or less (neighborhood-serving)</li><li>100% Affordable Housing Projects</li></ul>
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# VMT Per Capita

Existing VMT per Population Compared to Regional Average for LA County



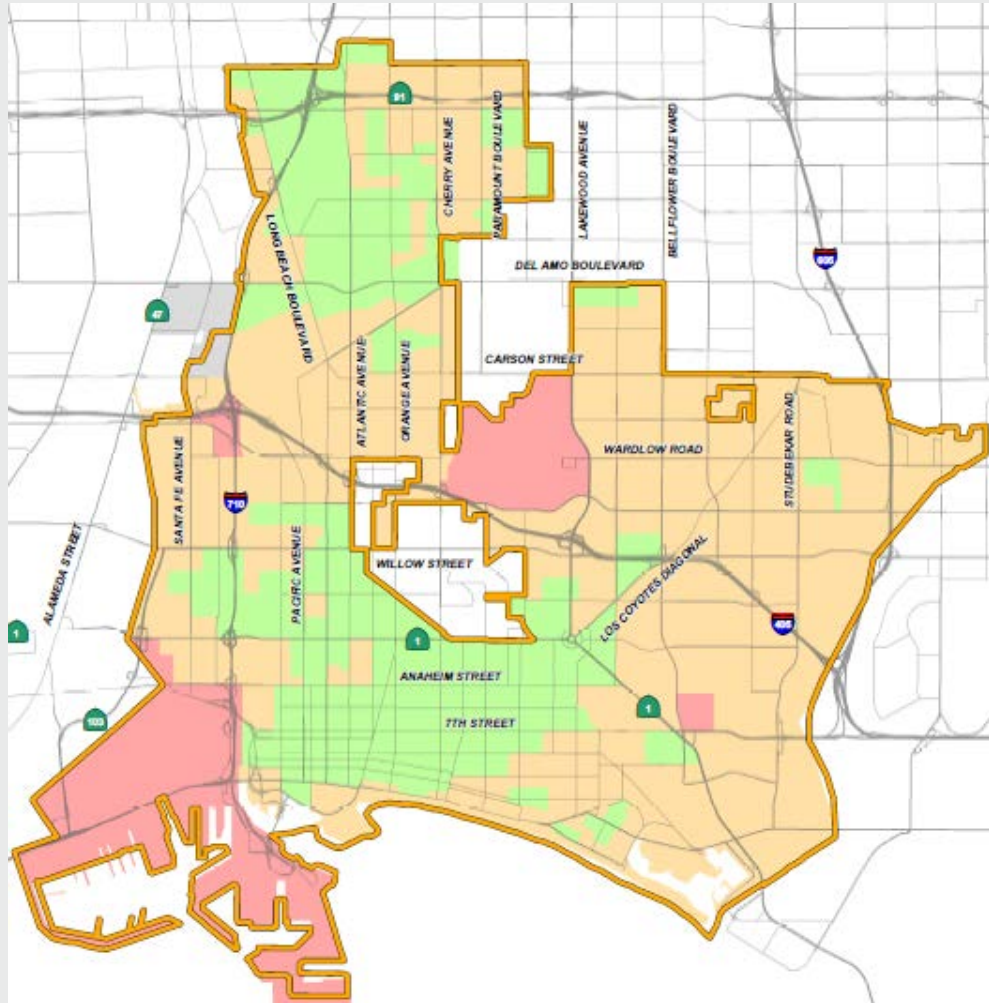
***County of Los Angeles Average VMT per Population: 13.9***

## VMT per Population

- No Population
- Less than 11.8 (less than 85% of the regional average)
- 11.8 - 16.0 (85% to 115% of the regional average)
- Greater than 16.0 (greater than 115% of the regional average)





# VMT Per Employee

Existing VMT per Employee Compared to Regional Average for LA County



**County of Los Angeles Average VMT per Employee: 18.5**

## VMT per Employee

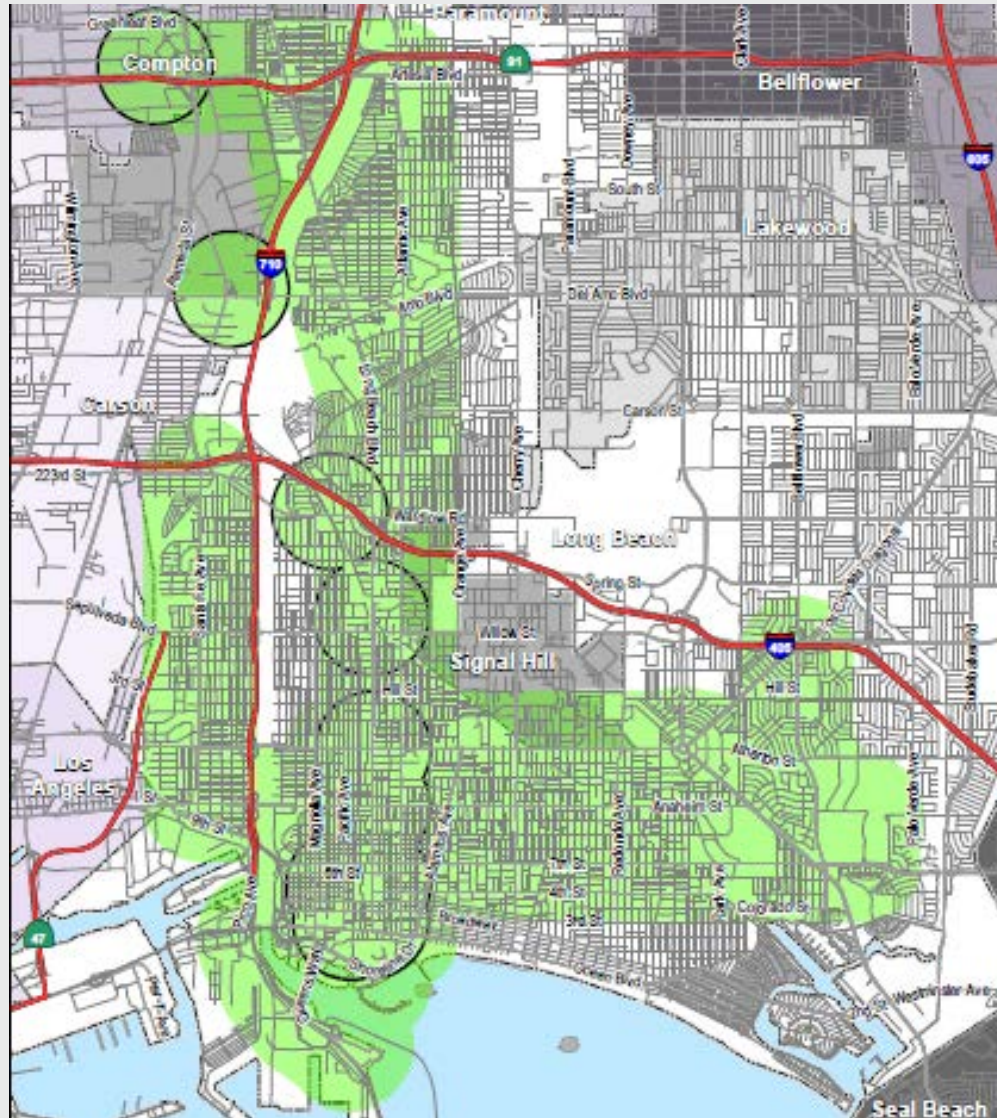
-  No Employee
-  Less than 15.7 (less than 85% of the regional average)
-  15.7 - 21.3 (85% to 115% of the regional average)
-  Greater than 21.3 (greater than 115% of the regional average)

# Development Projects: Screening Criteria

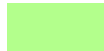

Project Type/ Land Use	Presumption of Less Than Significant
Small Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Generating fewer than 50 peak hour trips (or 500 average daily trips)</li></ul>
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# High Quality Transit Corridor/Major Transit Stop



## LEGEND

-  Half mile from High Quality Transit Corridor or Major Transit Stop
-  Half mile from Major Transit Stop



# Development Projects: Significance Thresholds

Project Type/ Land Use	Metric/Threshold	Less Than Significant
Residential	Regional VMT Per Capita (13.9 miles)	More than 15% below average (VMT less than 11.8 miles)
Office	Regional VMT Per Employee (18.5 miles)	More than 15% below average (VMT less than 15.7 miles)
Retail	Regional VMT	No net increase in total VMT
Industrial	Regional VMT Per Employee	No net increase in total VMT per employee (VMT less than 18.5 miles)
Other	Regional VMT Per Employee or Per Capita	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No net increase if consistent with the LUE</li> <li>More than 15% below average, if seeking a General Plan Amendment</li> </ul>
Institutional/ Government and Public Service Uses	VMT is accounted for in the existing regional average	Screened from subsequent CEQA VMT analysis

# Port Projects

- Port of Long Beach is the lead agency for projects in the Harbor District
- Per OPR Guidance: Heavy duty truck trips generated by the Port or other industrial uses **are outside of the purview of SB 743**
  - **Truck trips** are not a result of the land use type itself, but **are driven by external economic factors**
- Environmental impacts associated with heavy duty trucks are addressed in other CEQA sections, like air quality
  - They are still subject to CEQA review, just not as a transportation impact
  - They are subject to applicable California Air Resources Board (CARB) regulations

# Potential Mitigation Measures

- The proposed TIA guidelines include a menu of evidence-based mitigation measures that projects may employ to mitigate their project impacts.
- Potential Mitigation measures include:
  - ✓ Changes to project design (such as site orientation towards transit or including an onsite grocery store or other local serving retail)
  - ✓ Pricing strategies (such as paying for resident, employee, or low-income transit passes)
  - ✓ Paying into funds for capital projects (such as for pedestrian, bike or transit improvements)
- The City and the applicant will work together to determine the range of mitigation measures necessary to mitigate project impacts to less than significant levels.

## VMT Per Household Metric

- A lower VMT per household in the horizon year, with the proposed plan, than occurs in the existing condition
  - Household metric consistent with LUE goal to reduce documented household overcrowding
  - Off-peak discretionary trips increase when households increase
- A VMT per employee metric may be used if a land plan is primarily non-residential

# Transportation Projects

## Any Net Increase in Total VMT

- Any increase in VMT attributable to the project is deemed to have a significant impact
- Projects assumed to have an impact include:
  - Projects that add vehicle travel lanes
  - Projects that induce vehicular traffic
- Transportation Projects with no impacts
  - Include those that facilitate travel by non-vehicular modes
    - Bike Lanes
    - Public Transit
    - Pedestrian facilities



## How It Works?

- Implemented through Environmental Review Process
  - Coordinated through City Traffic Engineer in the Department of Public Works
    - Determine if project is screened out
    - If not, a project VMT analysis conducted
    - VMT will be compared to the appropriate regional average
    - Projects that achieve the required reduction will be determined to have a less than significant impact
    - If they exceed those thresholds, they will be required to identify ways to mitigate the impacts
- Ongoing evaluation of effectiveness for reducing VMT and GHGs, as dictated by City CAAP

# Consistency with the General Plan

- The move to VMT helps implement the Mobility Element policy framework which promotes a balanced, multimodal transportation network and complete streets
  - Achieves the intent of multi-modal level of service to:
    - Per MOP Policy 4-1: Consider effects on overall mobility and various travel modes when evaluating transportation impacts of new developments or infrastructure projects.
    - Per MOP Policy 4-3: Develop a new Multimodal Level of Service (MMLoS) methodology that includes the following components:
      - ☐ Emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle access and circulation.
      - ☐ Maintenance of appropriate emergency vehicle access and response time.
      - ☐ Support for reduced vehicle miles traveled.

# Recommendation

Find that the proposed project is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) and Section 15308 and that none of the exceptions in Section 15300.2 apply; and adopt the proposed Traffic Impact Analysis Guidelines, in accordance with Section 1002(f) of Article X of the City Charter. (Citywide)





Thank you

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# LOS Analysis for Project Review

## City Can Still Require LOS Analysis

- For non-CEQA purposes
- Through the project development review process
- Would inform project conditions, but not CEQA mitigations