



# CITY OF POMONA

## PLANNING COMMISSION

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**DATE:** May 13, 2020

**TO:** Planning Commission

**FROM:** Anita D. Gutierrez, AICP, Development Services Director

**SUBJECT:** Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Workshop

### SUMMARY

The purpose of this workshop is to provide the Commission with information and background on the new State mandated methodology for reviewing environmental impacts, Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). As an approving and recommending body for land use projects and CEQA environmental determinations, the Planning Commission will need to become familiar with VMT analysis when considering future land use decisions and environmental impacts. In coordination with Fehr and Peers, staff will conduct a workshop with the Planning Commission to familiarize the Commission with this topic and receive input.

### BACKGROUND

On April 6, 2020, the City Council approved a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG) to participate in the San Gabriel Valley Regional VMT Analysis Model, along with 25 other cities in the San Gabriel Valley. Upon completion of the Model, Staff will utilize it to analyze project-related VMT to determine whether transportation impacts from proposed development will constitute a significant environmental impact under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The passage of Senate Bill (SB) 743 (Steinberg, 2013) changes how transportation impacts are measured under CEQA in the review of land use and transportation plans and projects. SB 743 removed automobile delay, or Level of Service (LOS), as the primary measure of transportation impacts of environmental significance, and required the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to develop revisions to CEQA Guidelines establishing criteria for determining the significance of transportation impacts. OPR subsequently selected VMT as the preferred metric to comply with SB 743.

As a result of these changes, lead agencies under CEQA will be required to analyze project-related VMT to determine whether transportation impacts from a given development would constitute a significant environmental impact under CEQA beginning July 1, 2020. In order to properly evaluate impacts, it will be necessary for local agencies to establish methodologies and quantified thresholds from which to determine levels of significance. The City currently has no methodology or mechanism in place to transition to these new requirements.

After receiving requests from a majority of the San Gabriel Valley cities to lead a regional effort to assist cities in complying with these VMT requirements, the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG) conducted a comprehensive Request for Proposals (RFP) process. As a result, Fehr and Peers was selected as the most qualified firm to provide professional consultant services to complete the San Gabriel Valley Regional VMT Analysis Model.

This project will analyze existing traffic conditions in the region to arrive at a baseline standard from which to determine significance thresholds for future land use and transportation projects. It will result in recommendations for establishing methodology, thresholds, and technical tools and procedures for CEQA analysis and transportation impacts of land use and transportation projects and plans in the local jurisdictions within the San Gabriel Valley.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Staff anticipates bringing a draft VMT Threshold Resolution to the Planning Commission on May 27, 2020 for a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council is scheduled to consider the draft VMT Threshold Resolution for adoption in June, before the July 1, 2020 deadline to begin using VMT as a metric for transportation impacts. In preparation for the Planning Commission Workshop, please find attached information to familiarize the Commission with this topic.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

- 1) [What is VMT? \(Video\)](#)
- 2) FAQ – Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA
- 3) Summary of Lead Agency Decisions, Options, and Recommendations