

TRAFFIC IMPACT ANALYSIS GUIDELINES

April 2021



City of West Hollywood
California 1984



BACKGROUND

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was adopted in 1970 and incorporated in the Public Resources Code §21000-21177. Its basic purposes are to inform governmental decision makers and the public about the potential significant environmental effects of proposed activities; identify ways that environmental damage can be avoided or significantly reduced, require changes in projects through the use of alternatives or mitigation measures when feasible; and disclose to the public the reasons why a project was approved if significant environmental effects are involved. Although CEQA is a legal tool of disclosure, it does not replace the City's General Plan as a planning tool.

On September 27, 2013, SB 743 was signed into law. SB 743 fundamentally changes how traffic impacts are measured under the State's updated CEQA guidelines. A goal of the law was to help California combat climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions related to transportation, by developing traffic impact guidelines and metrics that encourage compact, infill, mixed-use development in urban areas served by public transit and other alternative modes of transportation.

To this end, SB 743 mandates that cities replace traffic impact analysis metric Level of Service (LOS) with Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). LOS has been the City's adopted metric as outlined in the City's Traffic Impact Guidelines and is based on vehicular delay at intersections. Determining whether or not a project may result in a significant adverse impact is one of the key aspects of CEQA. CEQA guidelines allow lead agencies to adopt Thresholds of Significance to indicate the point at which an impact within their Jurisdiction will be considered significant. On November 16, 2020, West Hollywood City Council adopted new metrics and thresholds to be compliant with SB 743.

This document includes guidelines for conducting a Transportation Impact Study to determine CEQA impacts related to transportation. Additional mobility-related information may be required by the City through the development of a Supplemental Report; details on Supplemental Report are included after the Transportation Impact Study Guidelines below.

TRANSPORTATION IMPACT STUDY GUIDELINES

The Transportation Impact Study Guidelines reflect the changes to metrics and thresholds related to the implementation of SB 743. CEQA Guidelines for disclosing transportation impacts are operationalized through the Appendix G Checklist, which states the following:

XVII. TRANSPORTATION. Would the project:

- a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?*
- b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?*
- c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?*
- d) Result in inadequate emergency access?*

For the purposes of evaluation under CEQA, the Transportation Impact Study Guidelines include sections that allow for project evaluation for each of the above sections. The Transportation Impact Study

Guidelines also include additional sections beyond what is required for CEQA analysis. The Transportation Impact Study Guidelines include the following sections:

- VMT Analysis
- Site Analysis & Site Plan Review
- Driveway & Circulation Analysis

The table below shows which of the Transportation Impact Study Guidelines sections relate to each of the four CEQA Appendix G - Transportation questions.

	VMT Analysis	Site Plan Review & Analysis	Driveway & Circulation Analysis
a) Conflict with Programs, Plans, Ordinances, or Policies		x	x
b) Conflict with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3	x		
c) Substantially increase hazards		x	x
d) Result in inadequate emergency access		x	x

Each section is described in more detail, below.

VMT Analysis

Consistent with OPR's guidelines related to high quality transit corridors, development projects in West Hollywood are presumed to have a less than significant transportation impact due to the proximity of high quality transit corridors throughout the City, if the project meets *all* of the following criteria:¹

1. Project has a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) equal to or greater than 0.75
2. Project does not have more than the required number of parking spaces, as specified by Chapter 10.07 of the West Hollywood Municipal Code
3. Project is consistent with *Connect SOCAL*, the Southern California Association of Governments' Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy
4. Project does not replace affordable residential units with fewer affordable residential units, moderate-income residential units, or high-income residential units (i.e. must maintain the same number of existing affordable units or provide more)
5. Project does not have potential for significant regional draw (commercial uses that may require specialized workforce, i.e. movie production studios).

Following discussion with City staff, if the project is determined to meet *all* above criteria, no VMT analysis is required. If the project does not meet *all* above criteria, a VMT analysis is required.

¹ Consistent with CEQA Guidelines, § 15064.3(b)(1), projects within a one-half mile of either an existing major transit stop or a stop along an existing high quality transit corridor should be presumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact. All land use projects within the City of West Hollywood would be within a one-half mile of a stop along an existing high quality transit corridor, which is defined as a fixed route bus service that operates with 15-minute headways during commute hours (PRC § 21155).

If a VMT analysis is required, the project applicant should work with City staff to conduct a VMT analysis to determine the project's VMT/capita and VMT/employee metrics. These metrics are calculated by determining the VMT associated with the residential and commercial components of the project and dividing by the number of associated residents and/or employees.

Thresholds of Significance for these metrics were developed based on West Hollywood's Travel Demand Forecasting Model, updated in 2017. Per OPR Guidelines, the Thresholds of Significance for both residential and commercial projects are set at 15% below the existing VMT/capita and VMT/employee. They are shown in the table, below.

	Citywide VMT Average (Baseline)	Significance Threshold (15% below Baseline)
Residential – VMT/Capita	13.3	11.3
Commercial – VMT/Employee	15.3	13.0

The VMT analysis should be conducted using the City of West Hollywood VMT Tool (conducted by City Staff), which calculates the relevant metrics for a project based on project inputs including project parcel number(s), project land use quantities, and TDM measures that the project will implement in compliance with West Hollywood's TDM Ordinance passed in 2018 (Ord. 18-1034 § 11, 2018). Selection of TDM measures may be used to mitigate any significant impacts, and will be calculated automatically through the City of West Hollywood VMT Tool if they are selected.

Site Plan Review & Analysis

Site plan review and analysis are required for informational purposes and to contribute to the CEQA determination related to consistency with Programs, Plans, Ordinances, and Policies, identification of any project-related geometric hazards, and identification of adequate emergency access. This review and analysis should consider the project within the four corners of the site and include a discussion of each of the following components:

- Consistency with Programs, Plans, Ordinances, and Policies identified in the City of West Hollywood's General Plan Circulation Element, Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan, and Climate Action Plan and other local/regional documents such as the SCAG RTP
- Identification of on-site geometric hazards (i.e. sharp curves; conflict zones between pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles; sight-line issues; driveway queuing that creates hazards on-site)
- Emergency access

Driveway & Circulation Analysis

Driveway and circulation analysis are required for informational purposes and to contribute to the CEQA determination related to consistency with Programs, Plans, Ordinances, and Policies, identification of any project-related geometric hazards, and identification of adequate emergency access. This review and analysis should consider the intersections that provide immediate access to the project site, critical major intersections nearby, and all project driveways, working with City staff to identify and finalize the

intersections to be studied prior to analysis. Where relevant, include a discussion of each of the following components:

- Consistency with Programs, Plans, Ordinances, and Policies identified in the City of West Hollywood's General Plan Circulation Element, Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan, and Climate Action Plan and other local/regional documents such as the SCAG RTP
- Identification of project-related geometric hazards in the public right-of-way (i.e. sharp curves; conflict zones between pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles; sight-line issues; driveway queuing that creates hazards in the public right-of-way)
- Emergency access along the public right-of-way adjacent to the project

SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT

The Supplemental Report may include the following sections, based on discussion with City staff:

- Residential street analysis
- Traffic operations and safety analysis
- Parking and on-site circulation

Residential Street Analysis

For informational purposes only, a residential street analysis should be conducted to identify the effects of a commercial project on residential street segments. Any project that generates commercial trips should determine the likely amount of neighborhood cut-through traffic that would occur and, if necessary, develop and implement a neighborhood traffic management plan that takes local context of the surrounding residential streets and existing traffic into consideration. Project applicants shall work with City staff and the community to appropriately scale the neighborhood traffic management plan to the project size and the intensity of the anticipated effects on residential streets caused by the commercial components of the project.

The residential street analysis should compare "before and after" conditions:

- The "before" scenario should consider all existing average daily traffic (ADT) before project implementation.
- The "after" scenario should consider existing ADT plus any new commercial trips related to the project.

If City staff determine that a neighborhood traffic management plan is necessary, it may be required to include elements that address any adverse effects of commercial traffic on residential streets, such as:

- Traffic speed and volume management elements (e.g., curb extensions, speed bumps, speed tables, chicanes, medians, diverters, turn restrictions)
- Site plan adjustments (e.g., driveway locations, loading zones, access points for pick-up/drop-off).

Other strategies in addition to those listed above may be suggested and considered. In coordination with City staff, the project applicant should also include public outreach to the surrounding community in the neighborhood traffic management plan to determine the final approach.

Traffic Operations & Safety Analysis

For informational purposes only, a traffic operations and safety analysis may be required to identify operational concerns that may result from the project at nearby intersections. The scope of the analysis may include the four corners of the project site and/or major intersections nearby. Highway Capacity Manual Level of Service analysis methodology should be used. The analysis should consider Existing, Future No Project, and Future Plus Project scenarios. Related projects will be provided by the City.

The analysis may be required to include:

- Evaluation of queuing
- Evaluation of intersection delay
- Evaluation of pedestrian and bicycle conflicts

In addition, an analysis of the curbside space may be required to ensure interactions between vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists are minimized. This analysis may be required to include:

- Evaluation of TNC and passenger drop-off/pick-up zones relative to sidewalk space, bicycle facilities, and transit stops
- Evaluation of delivery zones and loading zones, in compliance with requirements set forth in West Hollywood Municipal Code section 19.28.020
- Evaluation of conditions based on time of day

The traffic operations and safety analysis should also include development of policies, project features, and/or public right-of-way infrastructure changes to balance access, mobility, and safety for all users both on-site and in the public right-of-way.

Parking and On-Site Circulation

For informational purposes only, a parking and on-site circulation analysis may be required. The scope of the analysis may include the following overarching sections:

- Supply: Provide code requirements for the project and actual number of spaces proposed by land use and type (e.g., residential parking, commercial parking, compact, standard, EV, carpool, loading, ADA accessible, long-term and short-term bicycle parking, etc.). Identify any reductions in parking spaces through bonuses and shared parking. If applicable, provide shared parking analysis.
- Design: Provide design details including drive-aisle width, parking stall dimensions, loading zone dimensions, turn templates for trucks and other oversized vehicles where applicable.
- Site plan review: Provide details related to on-site circulation including pathways and mixing zones for pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles, and people using mobility devices.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Project Information

Project Name: _____

Project Address: _____

Project Description: _____

Project Opening Year: _____

Project Contact Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail: _____

Based on the criteria describe in the TIS Guidelines, does this project require VMT analysis? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Trip Generation

Circle one: ITE (latest edition unless directed by the City) / Other _____

Please attach a trip generation table including a description of existing and proposed land uses, rates, estimated AM Peak Hour, PM Peak Hour, and Total Daily Vehicle Trips (ins/outs/totals), and proposed trip credits.

☐ Trip Generation Table Attached

Trip Distribution Plot

Please attach a trip distribution plot showing the site plan and project vehicle peak hour trips at project driveways and study intersections.

☐ Trip Distribution Plot Attached

Study Intersections/Segments for Supplemental Reports:

Analysis scenarios included (related projects list provided by the City):

☐ Existing

☐ Future No Project

☐ Future Plus Project

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Measures

Please list any TDM measures that are being considered which would require coordination with the City of West Hollywood or other agencies (e.g., Metro).

Site Plan & Map

Please attach a site plan and study area map that includes the following elements:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Study intersections | ☐ Delivery/loading zones (goods and people) |
| ☐ Project driveways (including striping/widths) | ☐ Bicycle parking on-site |
| ☐ Pedestrian access points/mixing zones | ☐ Bicycle parking off-site |

Project Construction

Will the project require any construction activity in the public right of way that will require temporary closure of any of the following?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| ☐ Travel lane | ☐ Bike Lane |
| ☐ Bus stop | ☐ Bicycle parking |
| ☐ Parking lane | ☐ Other: _____ |
| ☐ Sidewalk | |

Approved by:

Name: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

(Consultant/Developer's Representative)

(West Hollywood Representative)