

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LA HABRA, CALIFORNIA, ADOPTING “VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED” THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE FOR PURPOSES OF ANALYZING TRANSPORTATION IMPACTS UNDER THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

WHEREAS, the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (“CEQA Guidelines”) encourage public agencies to develop and publish generally applicable “thresholds of significance” to be used in determining the significance of a project’s environmental effects; and

WHEREAS, CEQA Guidelines section 15064.7(a) defines a threshold of significance as “an identifiable quantitative, qualitative or performance level of a particular environmental effect, noncompliance with which means the effect will normally be determined to be significant by the agency and compliance with which means the effect normally will be determined to be less than significant”; and

WHEREAS, CEQA Guidelines section 15064.7(b) requires that thresholds of significance must be adopted by ordinance, resolution, rule, or regulations, developed through a public review process, and be supported by substantial evidence; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15064.7(c), when adopting thresholds of significance, a public agency may consider thresholds of significance adopted or recommended by other public agencies provided that the decision of the agency is supported by substantial evidence; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 743, enacted in 2013 and codified in Public Resources Code section 21099, required changes to the CEQA Guidelines regarding the criteria for determining the significance of transportation impacts of projects; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (“OPR”) proposed, and the California Natural Resources Agency certified and adopted, new CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 that identifies vehicle miles traveled (“VMT”) – meaning the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project – as the most appropriate metric to evaluate a project’s transportation impacts; and

WHEREAS, as a result, automobile delay, as measured by “level of service” (“LOS”) and other similar metrics, will generally no longer constitute a significant environmental effect under CEQA; and

WHEREAS, CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 requires agencies to stop treating automobile delay/LOS as an environmental impact effective on July 1, 2020, though public agencies may elect to be governed by this section immediately; and

WHEREAS, the City of La Habra, following a public review process consisting of staff presentations before the City Council and a public outreach meeting, wishes to adopt the VMT thresholds of significance for determining the significance of transportation impacts that are recommended in an analysis conducted by the collaborative of seven North Orange County cities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of La Habra as follows:

Section 1. The City of La Habra hereby adopts the following:

1. Utilizing the Orange County Travel Demand Model (OCTAM) as its preferred methodology to measure VMT.
2. Utilizing the Orange County Travel Demand Model (OCTAM) as its preferred method to analyze a project's VMT impact.
3. Utilizing a threshold consistent with Table 1 in Exhibit A.

Section 2. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption by the City Council, and the Clerk of the Council shall attest to and certify the vote adopting this Resolution.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the City Council on the 17th day of May, 2021.

 Rose Espinoza
 Mayor

ATTEST:

 Laurie Swindell, CMC
 City Clerk

STATE OF CALIFORNIA }
 CITY OF LA HABRA } SS
 COUNTY OF ORANGE }

I, Laurie Swindell, CMC, City Clerk for the City of La Habra, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct copy of Resolution No. ____ introduced and adopted at a Regular Meeting of the City Council of the City of La Habra held on the 17th day of May, 2021, by the following roll call vote:

AYES: COUNCILMEMBERS:
 NOES: COUNCILMEMBERS:
 ABSENT: COUNCILMEMBERS:
 ABSTAIN: COUNCILMEMBERS:

Witness my hand and the official seal of the City of La Habra this 17th day of May, 2021.

 Laurie Swindell, CMC
 City Clerk

Exhibit A

Table 1 VMT Impact Thresholds		
Methods	Project Threshold	Cumulative Threshold
Land Use Plans (such as General Plans and Specific Plans)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Orange County Traffic Analysis Model (OCTAM) forecast of total daily VMT/SP.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>To capture project effect, the same cumulative year population and employment growth totals should be used. The 'project' only influences land use allocation.</u> 	<p><u>A significant impact would occur if the project VMT/SP (for the land use plan) exceeds the Citywide average under General Plan Buildout Conditions.</u></p>	<p><u>A significant impact would occur if the project caused total daily VMT within the City to be higher than the no project alternative under cumulative conditions.</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Consistency check with SCAG RTP/SCS.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Is the proposed project within the growth projections in the RTP/SCS?</u> 	<p>NA</p>	<p><u>A significant impact would occur if the project is determined to be inconsistent with the RTP/SCS.</u></p>
Land Use Projects		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Transit Priority Area (TPA) screening.</u> 	<p><u>Presumed less than significant VMT impact for projects located in TPAs.</u></p>	<p><u>Project presumption applies under cumulative conditions as long as project is consistent with SCAG RTP/SCS.</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Low VMT area screening.</u> 	<p><u>Presumed less than significant VMT impact for projects located in low VMT generating model traffic analysis zones (TAZs). These TAZs generate total daily VMT/SP that is 15% less than the baseline level for the County.</u></p>	<p><u>Project presumption applies under cumulative conditions as long as project is consistent with SCAG RTP/SCS.</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Project type screening.</u> 	<p><u>Local serving retail projects (Per OPR's Technical Advisory less than 50,000 square feet), neighborhood schools, and other local service using as defined in the TIA guideline are presumed to have a less than significant VMT impact. Projects that generate less than 110 daily trips do not require VMT analysis.</u></p>	<p><u>Project presumption applies under cumulative conditions as long as project is consistent with SCAG RTP/SCS.</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>VMT analysis using OCTAM forecast of total daily VMT/SP.</u> 	<p><u>A significant impact would occur if the project VMT/SP exceeds the Citywide average under General Plan Buildout Conditions.</u></p>	<p><u>A significant impact would occur if the project is determined to be inconsistent with the RTP/SCS.</u></p> <p><u>A significant impact would occur if the project causes total daily VMT within the City to be higher than the no project alternative under cumulative conditions. This analysis should be performed</u></p>

Table 1 VMT Impact Thresholds		
Methods	Project Threshold	Cumulative Threshold
		using the 'project effect' or 'boundary' method.
Transportation Projects (thresholds may apply for SB 743 or GHG purposes)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OCTAM forecast of total citywide daily VMT¹ 	A significant impact would occur if the project increased the baseline VMT within the City.	A significant impact would occur if the project caused total daily VMT within the City to be higher than the no build alternative under cumulative conditions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistency check with SCAG RTP/SCS 	NA	A significant impact would occur if the project is determined to be inconsistent with the RTP/SCS.

¹ It is recommended that OCTAM is used to develop VMT estimates for transportation project impact assessment. However, the analyst must verify the model results for sensitivity to changes in VMT. Alternatively, if the model is not deemed appropriate, Robert Cevero's research on lane-mile elasticity and its relationship to VMT can be referenced.