



Land Use Committee Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: LAND USE COMMITTEE **DATE: AUGUST 10, 2026**

FROM: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT **WARDS: ALL**

SUBJECT: TRAFFIC IMPACT ANALYSIS GUIDELINES UPDATE FOR VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED AND LEVEL OF SERVICE ASSESSM

ISSUE:

The Land Use Committee is requested to receive and file an update on the Traffic Impact Analysis Guidelines.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Land Use Committee:

1. Receive and file an update regarding Traffic Impact Analysis Guidelines for Vehicle Miles Traveled.

BACKGROUND:

In 2013, the State of California enacted Senate Bill 743 (SB 743), which shifted transportation impact analysis under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) from automobile delay-based metrics, such as Level of Service (LOS), to Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). The purpose of SB 743 is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, encourage multimodal transportation, and support sustainable land use development patterns.

Following the statewide transition to VMT analysis, agencies throughout California have faced challenges implementing screening criteria and mitigation methodologies for development projects. The City of Riverside has been a regional leader in VMT implementation, including establishment of the first VMT Mitigation Bank in the Inland Empire region.

The City's prior Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) Guidelines established screening criteria that allowed smaller development projects to qualify for VMT screening exemptions and avoid preparation of detailed VMT analysis. Since adoption of the prior guidelines, Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) provided a small project screening criteria memo that provided additional technical analysis and updated regional travel modeling information.

Based on this updated technical information, the Public Works Department has revised the City's TIA Guidelines and updated the VMT screening thresholds to be consistent with the WRCOG memo.

DISCUSSION:

The updated TIA Guidelines incorporate revised VMT screening thresholds that significantly expand the number and types of projects eligible to screen from detailed VMT analysis. A project that qualifies for screening is not required to prepare a separate VMT analysis under CEQA.

The revised VMT thresholds are based on updated regional technical analysis and reflect current travel behavior and land use assumptions within Riverside County.

The updated VMT screening thresholds are summarized below:

LAND USE TYPE	PRIOR VMT SCREENING THRESHOLDS	UPDATED VMT SCREENING THRESHOLDS
Single Family Residential	11 dwelling units	79 dwelling units
Multi-Family Residential	16 dwelling units	152 dwelling units
Industrial	15,000 – 79,000 SF	304,317 SF
Office	10,000 SF	85,235 SF
Retail	50,000 SF	77,441 SF

The updated guidelines provide several benefits, including:

- Streamlining the development review process;
- Reducing consultant and environmental analysis costs for qualifying projects;
- Facilitating housing production and economic development opportunities;
- Improving consistency with updated regional transportation modeling practices; and
- Allowing staff resources to focus on projects with potentially greater transportation impacts.

The updated guidelines continue to maintain compliance with SB 743 and CEQA requirements while supporting the City's goals related to housing, economic development, and efficient project delivery. Staff will continue to evaluate future updates to VMT methodologies and coordinate with WRCOG and other regional agencies as transportation analysis practices evolve.

NEXT STEP:

Following presentation, Land Use Committee, staff will present the updated TIA Guidelines to the City Council.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with adoption of the updated TIA Guidelines. Implementation of the updated guidelines is anticipated to improve staff efficiency and reduce development processing time by reducing the number of projects requiring detailed VMT analysis.

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Attachments:

1. City of Riverside Traffic Impact Analysis Guidelines for Vehicle Miles Traveled and Level of Service Assessment
2. WRCOG Small Project Screening Criteria Memo
3. Presentation