



DATE: August 25, 2021

AGENDA ITEM # 5

TO: Complete Streets Commission

FROM: Jaime O. Rodriguez, Interim Staff Liaison to Complete Streets Commission

SUBJECT: Transportation Analysis Reports – Checklist Forms

ATTACHMENTS: Checklists, Guide to Checklists, Example Project TDM Analysis, Development Questionnaire

RECOMMENDATION:

Review Proposed Checklists for use with Transportation Analysis Reports and Questionnaire for Private Development Projects

INTRODUCTION

Private and public development projects are required to analyze environmental impacts from their projects as part of the CEQA requirement of the planning process. One key determination under CEQA is the transportation impact of the project. The process for analyzing transportation impacts has changed in the last year with the adoption of SB 743, which requires the use of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) to measure “impacts” versus traditional Level of Service (LOS) which uses “delay” as its measure of determining project impact. By evaluating transportation impacts, rather than delay, communities are better able to promote the state’s goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and traffic-related air pollution, promoting the development of a multimodal transportation system, and providing clean, efficient access to destinations. Government agencies may still require traditional LOS analysis as part of a project’s submittal package, but environmental impacts must be measured using VMT.

To help guide developers and their consultant teams in the development of Transportation Analysis reports in Los Altos, Staff worked with consultants to develop Transportation Analysis Checklists by development type (e.g., residential, commercial, schools, etc.). The checklists focus on the “Operations Analysis” requirements to ensure proper integration of a project into the Los Altos community with a focus on mobility improvements and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) requirements in line with the regional goals of VMT analysis and mitigation.

The City also proposes a Development Questionnaire to be completed by a development team, in advance of the CSC review meeting, to help guide the Complete Streets Commission in their review of projects. This will be a comprehensive checklist containing all the questions that frequently arise within the CSC review, with the intention of streamlining the review meeting.

BACKGROUND

With the adoption of SB 743 and the use of VMT over LOS, the City wants to develop a strategy for the long-term ability to measure cumulative impacts for development. (Cumulative traffic impact is something the Complete Streets Commission has wanted to track since even before the adoption of SB 743.) In response to this request, the City developed a Citywide LOS traffic model in 2019 and conducted a citywide traffic count at that time that serves as a Baseline (pre-pandemic) traffic condition for the City.

This summer marked the expansion of the Citywide LOS model to include “Near-Term Cumulative” traffic counts from both Approved and Pending projects with traffic estimates from projects in Los Altos, Mountain View, Cupertino, Palo Alto, Sunnyvale, and Los Altos Hills. The updated Citywide LOS Model will be complete this Fall. Upon completion City staff will be able to share the model with future development teams to ensure consistent review of projects.

The Transportation Analysis Checklists are intended to include parameters to ensure consistency in traffic reports. Staff has noticed that Transportation Analyses have been less robust than traditional Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) reports that were focused on the measure of LOS. It is the City’s intention to establish both better consistency and expanded Operations Analysis for mobility through the development of the checklists.

The Transportation Questionnaire is not tied to CEQA requirements but was requested by the Commission. The purpose of the questionnaire is to allow developers to proactively provide answers to common questions and help commissioners focus their review efforts on targeted areas.

DISCUSSION

The City contracted with Hexagon Transportation Consultants to assist in the development of the attached Transportation Analysis Checklists (Exhibit A). Hexagon has prepared many of the traditional TIA reports for projects in the City and is a regional leader in development of methodologies to measure VMT. The City and Hexagon prepared Transportation Analysis Checklists for the following types of projects:

- Residential
- Office
- Retail
- Restaurant
- Day Care
- Medical & Dental Offices
- Public Facilities
- Entertainment Venues
- School

Each checklist includes the following categories for the Transportation Analysis:

Basic Transportation Elements

Trip Generation and Trip Distribution Calculations onto the public roadway including Parking Generation Calculations.

Intersection Control Analysis	LOS analysis requirement including thresholds for when projects must analyze Existing, Existing + Project, Near-Term Cumulative, Near-Term Cumulative + Project, and Future (2040) + Project conditions.
Operations Analysis	This section defined roadway operations analysis including intersection controls, on-site circulation, Bike-Ped analysis, and Neighborhood Traffic Intrusion Analysis.
Required Off-Site Improvements	New in the City's transportation requirements, this section defines required off-site improvements that are specific to expanding bicycle and pedestrian facilities to support Safe Route to School and Bike Network infrastructure expansion.
TDM Plan Requirements:	New in the City's transportation requirements, every project will be required to include some element of TDM for their project. This section offers a menu of TDM options for projects to choose from.

The City requests commission input on the Transportation Analysis checklists.

Exhibit B includes the Draft Development Questionnaire that a development team would be required to complete to proactively provide answers to frequently asked questions to assist in the facilitation of Commission review. Staff requests commission input on the proposed questionnaire.