



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: June 3, 2014

TO: Mayor and Council members

FROM: Transportation Division, Public Works Department and
Planning Division, Community Development Department

SUBJECT: Adoption Of Updated Traffic Impact Significance Thresholds

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopt, by reading of title only, A Resolution of the Council of the City of Santa Barbara Establishing Updated Traffic Impact Significance Thresholds Consistent with the City Traffic Management Strategy in the Non-Residential Growth Management Program.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The recommended City Council action would implement the City Traffic Management Strategy with updated traffic impact significance thresholds, for use in environmental review of projects under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and for applying land use policy limitations to projects with significant traffic impacts.

In 2013, City Council adopted the Traffic Management Strategy as part of the Non-Residential Growth Management Program with the intent of minimizing future traffic congestion while allowing incremental growth and economic development. The 2011 General Plan Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) identified up to 27 intersections where significant future traffic congestion either exists or is expected to occur by the year 2030 during the peak travel times due to limited intersection capacity. The Traffic Management Strategy established that a significant project-specific impact occurs at the point that an individual project uses a disproportionate share of remaining intersection capacity.

This action by Council will update the project-specific traffic threshold of significance, and confirm the existing cumulative traffic threshold consistent with the Traffic Management Strategy. Updating the thresholds will also streamline the land development review process for developers and save process costs.

Following adoption of the updated traffic impact significance thresholds, staff will discuss implementation with the Planning Commission, incorporate them as part of the City CEQA environmental review procedures, and prepare Traffic Analysis Guidelines providing further procedural detail.

DISCUSSION:

The Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and traffic model prepared for the 2011 General Plan Update found that up to 27 intersections are either already impacted or could become cumulatively impacted by the year 2030 as a result of anticipated incremental citywide development (see Attachment 1 Map). As part of the General Plan Update process, City Council adopted a statement of overriding considerations, finding that the benefits of the General Plan outweighed the significant cumulative traffic effects, thereby deeming the traffic effects acceptable. However, Council also directed that the traffic effects should be reduced to the extent feasible.

In March 2013, City Council adopted the Non-Residential Growth Management Program to implement the General Plan land use development policies. As part of the Program, Council adopted a Traffic Management Strategy designed to reduce the cumulative traffic impacts of land use growth, while balancing the need for incremental development and economic health.

The Traffic Management Strategy supports and implements the City's policy for limited nonresidential growth and will minimize future traffic impacts on City roadways. The Strategy identifies that a project-specific traffic impact is the tipping point when one project's traffic generation would use up a disproportionate amount of the remaining traffic capacity. The Strategy allows most developments, but limits those that use too much of the remaining roadway and intersection capacity. Non-residential projects that may be considered for approval with a significant project-specific traffic impact are specified by the Strategy policies (e.g., reconstruction of demolished floor area; minor additions; community benefit projects; public facilities; vacant sites, etc.).

Threshold of Significance for Project-Specific Traffic Impact

One of the key mechanisms of the Traffic Management Strategy is the determination of when the traffic generation of a single project is considered to use a disproportionate share of the remaining traffic capacity, and therefore constitute a significant project-specific traffic impact for CEQA environmental review and policy consistency purposes. An 'impacted intersection' is defined by Santa Barbara policy as operation at a vehicle traffic volume-to-intersection capacity ratio exceeding 77% during peak hours, which represents a high "C" level of service (LOS) within the A to F range of operating conditions. The current City traffic threshold for significant project-specific impacts is as follows:

Existing Significance Threshold for Project-Specific Traffic Impact: A significant project-specific traffic impact would result if a project's net peak-hour

traffic generation would increase the volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratio at an intersection to greater than .77, or would increase the V/C ratio by .01 or more when an intersection is already operating at greater than .77 V/C ratio during peak hours.

A disadvantage with the existing project-specific threshold is that it considers the traffic impact of a project as a snapshot in time in comparison to existing traffic conditions. The updated threshold, while still using the 1% increase, considers the longer-term impact of the project's traffic generation in the context of intersections anticipated to become cumulatively impacted with incremental growth, with the intersections specified in the threshold. The proposed updated threshold reads as follows:

New Significance Threshold for Project-Specific Traffic Impact: A significant project-specific traffic impact would result if a project's net peak-hour traffic generation would constitute 1% or more of the intersection capacity at one or more of the following intersections:

1. Olive Mill & Coast Village	2. Coast Village Road Roundabout
3. Milpas & Quinientos	4. Milpas & Haley
5. Garden & Gutierrez	6. Garden & Highway 101 NB Ramps
7. Garden & Highway 101 SB Ramps	8. Castillo & Haley
9. Carrillo & Highway 101 NB Ramps	10. Carrillo & Highway 101 SB Ramps
11. Carrillo & San Andres	12. Mission & State
13. Mission & Castillo	14. Mission & Bath
15. Mission & Highway 101 NB Ramps	16. Mission & Highway 101 SB Ramps
17. Mission & Modoc	18. Meigs Road & Cliff Drive
19. Las Positas & Cliff	20. Las Positas & Modoc
21. Las Positas & 101 SB Ramps	22. Calle Real & Highway 101 NB Ramps
23. Las Positas & State	24. Hitchcock & State
25. Hope & State	26. La Cumbre & State
27. Hope, Calle Real & Highway 101 NB Ramps	

Threshold for a Project Contribution to Cumulative Traffic Impacts

CEQA requires that environmental impact analysis consider both project-specific impacts and project contributions to significant cumulative impacts. The currently used City threshold for contributions to cumulative traffic impacts is proposed to be retained, and the Council action would affirm it. It reads as follows:

Existing Cumulative Traffic Threshold: A considerable project contribution to cumulative traffic effects would result when a project's net peak-hour traffic together with other cumulative traffic from existing and reasonably foreseeable projects

would cause an intersection to exceed 0.77 V/C; or when the project would contribute peak-hour traffic to an intersection already exceeding 0.77 V/C.

The Program EIR for the 2011 General Plan provided a citywide cumulative traffic analysis to the year 2030 using this threshold. Development projects within the growth assumptions of this EIR analysis will be considered to contribute to the cumulative traffic effects identified in the Program EIR. This includes projects with net new residential units and projects with net new non-residential square footage.

Traffic Impact Assessment Procedures

CEQA regulations provide that if a proposed project is consistent with the development density established in a General Plan for which a Program EIR was certified, additional environmental review is not generally required, except as necessary to address unique project-specific significant impacts. Most land development proposals within the City limits are not large enough to trigger project-specific traffic impacts. As a result, the Council's investment in a Program EIR and overriding considerations of the cumulative traffic impact will facilitate and streamline the Land Development Team's traffic review of land development proposals.

Public Works Staff review all discretionary projects by conducting an internal preliminary traffic impact analysis. Project site trip generation during the morning and afternoon peak hours are calculated based on land development types and proposals. Staff then distributes estimated peak hour traffic on the roadway system to determine if a project specific traffic impact may occur. If a project could possibly have significant project-specific traffic impacts, the General Plan EIR Traffic Model will be used to determine the project level impact assessment. The traffic model will analyze project traffic against the 2030 project traffic conditions to determine if the project will use more than 1% capacity at any of the intersections listed in the Project Specific Threshold.

In July 2013, Council established a land development nominal fee to charge developers for an assessment using a site-specific traffic model analysis. The single fee will pay for a third party (consultant) assessment of the project using the City-developed traffic model. By naming the intersections in the proposed project-specific traffic impact threshold, the time and expense of additional traffic counts and typical traffic analysis reports will be substantially reduced.

Traffic analysis for projects at the airport and surrounding parcels will not be subject to the updated threshold, because the new threshold is specific to identified intersections within the main part of the City jurisdiction. Projects in the outlying airport area will continue to use the traditional City threshold and be coordinated with the County, City of Goleta, and Caltrans and established thresholds for roadways in their jurisdictions as appropriate.

In some cases developers may be required to conduct additional site-specific traffic engineering pertaining to circulation and traffic. While a project may not have broader

environmental traffic congestion consequences from trip generation, a project may disrupt the flow of traffic where driveways connect to City roadways or are in close proximity to intersections not currently signalized. In these cases, site-specific traffic engineering and improvements may be required of land developers. These types of improvements can be expensive depending on the extent needed.

Monitoring of Traffic Levels and Land Use

The Community Development Department will continue tracking land use development as part of the Growth Management Program and General Plan Adaptive Management Program. The Transportation Division will periodically conduct traffic counts to update traffic levels of service at City intersections. At that time, a traffic model run will also be conducted with updated land use data to compare its results to the traffic counts.

Traffic Counts are also periodically performed for the Congestion Management Program run by the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments. Intersections are predicted to be added or taken off the list if conditions change or as improvements are made. The intersection of Cliff & Las Positas, for example, can be removed from the list once the planned roundabout is constructed. The process to add or remove intersections from the list will include appropriate environmental analysis and a decision by the Council to amend the resolution.

CEQA Review

The action to adopt updated traffic thresholds is within the scope of the 2011 General Plan Update and Program EIR, and implementing Traffic Management Strategy. Section 15183 of the State CEQA Guidelines mandates that implementing actions consistent with General Plan policies for which an EIR was certified shall not require additional environmental review. The environmental analyst prepared a Certificate of Determination that the proposed Council action qualifies for this CEQA exemption. Council findings confirming this CEQA determination are included in the draft Council Resolution.

Stakeholder Group Participation

Staff came to Council with this same item on November 19 of last year. At that time, some members of the development community asked council to delay action so that developers could better understand the proposed updated thresholds. You may recall that staff had formed a Development Community Stakeholders group to vet the Traffic Management Strategy prior to Planning Commission involvement. Staff met again with this group in December last year to go over the proposed updated traffic thresholds. We also had follow-up meetings with a smaller group and responded in writing to questions (Attachment 2)

The Stakeholder Group submitted a letter of support (Attachment 3). In addition to supporting the traffic threshold update, they recommend following up this action with

Traffic Analysis Guidelines that will provide details on how the new program is to be implemented. Staff agrees and has attached an outline of the future Traffic Analysis Guidelines which is anticipated to come to City Council by September (see Attachment 4).

Staff also met with neighborhood association representatives to explain the proposed new thresholds.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

City Council established a Traffic Model Data Collection fee in July 2013, which accumulates in direct relationship to the amount of new traffic generated by land developments. New traffic counts and a traffic model run will be conducted when the accumulation of fees equals the amount of funding needed for the traffic evaluation.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

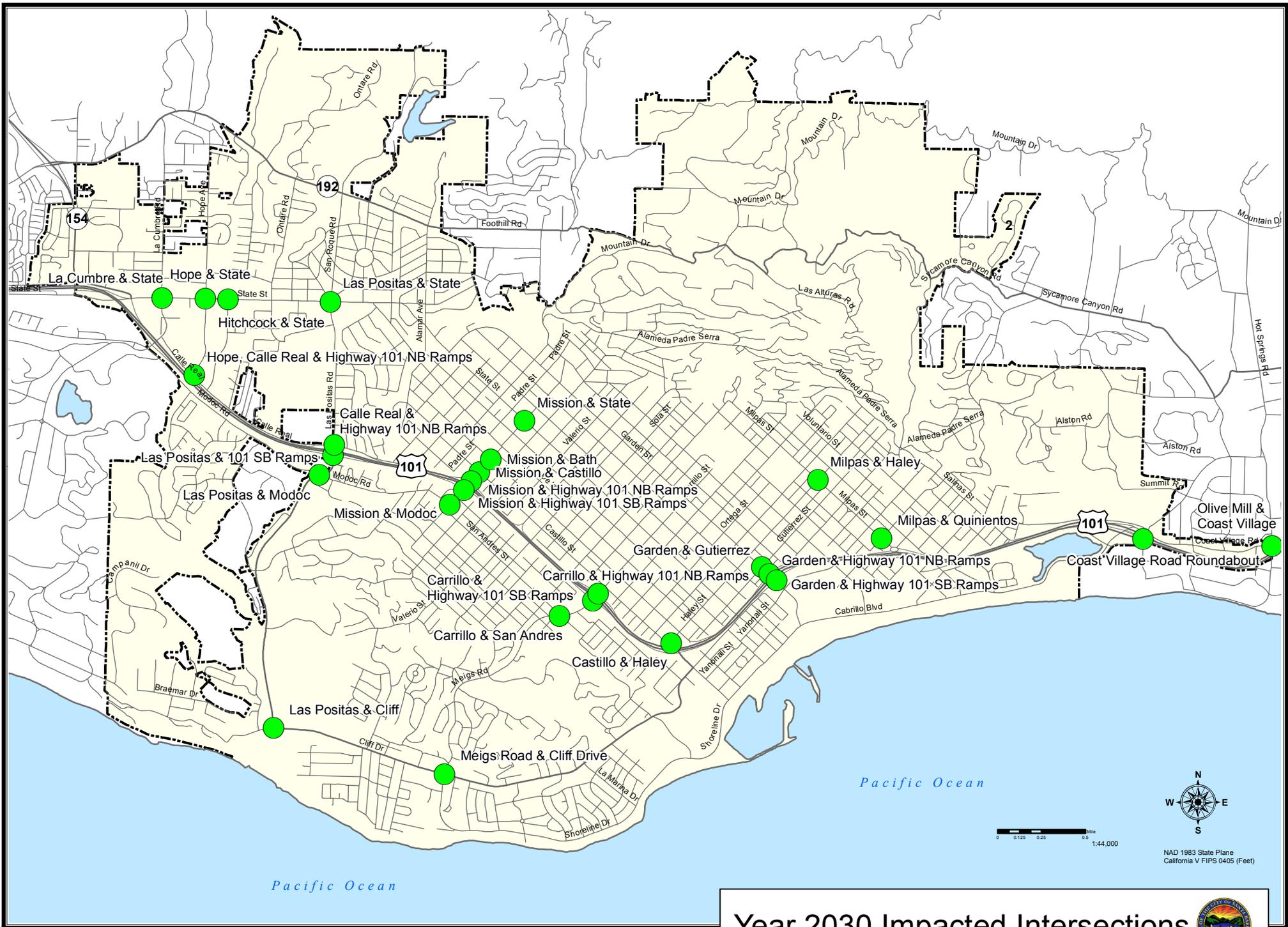
The updated traffic impact thresholds would implement Council General Plan and Growth Management Program goals for limiting the traffic effects of development and living within our resources, including roadway capacity. The threshold would also support Climate Plan goals for applying land use and transportation policies to reduce transportation-related carbon emissions that contribute to climate change.

- ATTACHMENTS:**
1. Map of Intersections
 2. Response to Development Community Stakeholders
 3. Stakeholder Group Support Letter
 4. Outline of the future Traffic Analysis Guidelines

PREPARED BY: Rob Dayton, Principal Transportation Planner
Barbara Shelton, Environmental Analyst

SUBMITTED BY: Bettie Weiss, Acting Community Development Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office



NAD 1983 State Plane
California V FIPS 0405 (Feet)

Year 2030 Impacted Intersections



Map prepared by City of Santa Barbara, Planning Division, May 2014

**Traffic Threshold – Stakeholders Discussion
Staff Response to February 28, 2014 Memo**

1. ***CEQA format. As discussed in our meeting, it was not clear how the new thresholds would be incorporated into future CEQA documents with respect to evaluating project-specific impacts using a future General Plan Build-out baseline. Would the document contain an Existing + Project section as well as a Build-out + Project analysis to evaluate project specific impacts? The group felt that it would be helpful to include an existing + project analysis in the environmental documents to ensure compliance with CEQA.***

Response: In general, the analysis of project-specific traffic impacts within CEQA documents will consist of trip generation calculations and distribution determinations (based on the City traffic model) applied against the new threshold: *a significant project-specific traffic impact results if a project's net peak-hour traffic generation would constitute 1% or more of intersection capacity at one or more of the 26 identified intersections.* Exceptions to this general rule would occur on a case-by-case basis when the city receives substantial evidence of a potential impact at an intersection that is not one of the 26 identified intersections.

This threshold and analysis of project-specific impacts does not compare project traffic generation against either an existing traffic conditions baseline or a future traffic conditions baseline. It is a metric for determining a significant project-specific impact that is different from past methods.

The development of the new project-specific impact threshold was informed by the General Plan Program EIR analysis of citywide traffic impacts, which considered both existing conditions and estimated build-out to the year 2030 under the General Plan. The analysis included development of a customized City traffic model that uses more accurate local trip generation rates than the traditional ITE national rates. The new threshold would be applied to the list of intersections either already impacted under existing conditions or expected to become impacted by the year 2030 with anticipated future growth.

The adopted policies in the General Plan and implementing Growth Management Ordinance and Traffic Management Strategy provide the basis for the new impact significance threshold by establishing that a significant project-specific traffic impact occurs when a project's traffic generation would use a substantial share of limited remaining intersection capacity. The new threshold defines that to be 1% of intersection capacity at any of the identified 26 intersections already impacted or expected to become impacted by the year 2030.

The State CEQA Guidelines support this type of approach to the traffic evaluation process. The Guidelines recommend using program EIR analysis to support policy development and mitigation programs, and to streamline subsequent CEQA review for individual projects. The Guidelines also identify significant impacts in terms of inconsistency with a policy or plan adopted for the purpose of mitigating environmental impacts. The California Resources Agency and Governor's Office of Planning & Research revised the CEQA Guidelines traffic impact question in the Appendix G Environmental Checklist (*formerly a substantial increase in traffic compared to existing traffic load and street capacity*). Since 2009, the new Guidelines question reflects a programmatic approach that considers entire circulation system management (*whether the project would conflict with an applicable plan or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for performance of the circulation system*).

The City Growth Management Ordinance and Traffic Management Strategy establish measures of effectiveness in the context of growth and traffic policies designed to manage the overall City circulation system and mitigate significant traffic effects. City policies retain the measure of Level of Service C (below .77 volume-to-capacity ratio) as the acceptable traffic level goal within the City. When a project would utilize 1% or more of intersection capacity at intersections with existing or projected peak-hour traffic levels above this LOS, a significant project-specific traffic effect is identified. A citywide traffic management approach is provided through limiting allowable types of new development with project-specific significant traffic impacts, and applying other mitigation measures such as road improvements, alternative transportation measures, or project land use or size changes.

SB 743 now in effect requires additional changes to how transportation effects are to be evaluated under CEQA. The bill directs the Resources Agency and OPR to establish Guidelines amendments that change the focus of traffic and parking impacts away from vehicle driver delay. The transportation metric for CEQA impact evaluation is expected to be changed from intersection level of service to an alternate measure such as trip generation. However, the City traffic analysis is a policy matter as well as CEQA matter, and is tied into the General Plan growth management and traffic management strategy. It is anticipated that the City would continue to do this traffic analysis for policy consistency even if it is not required as part of CEQA analysis.

2. ***Other Intersections. One of the items we discussed was the analysis of other intersections that were not reviewed in the City's General Plan EIR. It was anticipated that there could be questions and concerns from neighbors that local intersections were not included in a project-level impact analysis, and that this could result in a challenge to the certification of an environmental document. Would there be procedure be for analyzing other locations not included in the General Plan analysis? Or is the City taking a wait and see approach?***

Response: The City programmatic approach is based on the General Plan EIR cumulative analysis. The intersections counted for this analysis provided a representative sample of traffic conditions throughout the City as a basis for the traffic modeling. The traffic model analysis identified intersections anticipated to become impacted by 2030 with the forecasted level of growth. These are the intersections of concern with respect to overall functioning of the City circulation system in accordance with traffic policies. Project-specific traffic effects under CEQA are identified with respect to these intersections, and the Growth Management policies identify permitted types of development based on traffic impacts to these intersections.

This programmatic approach would be explained in response to neighbor concerns. While a project might contribute some traffic to another intersection, this would generally not constitute a significant impact under CEQA and would not need further analysis. In instances where a project has potential for a project-specific impact to one of the identified intersections, a model run will be done, and further information pertaining to other intersections could be made available. The City model and baseline conditions will be monitored and periodically updated as discussed in Item 3 below. If information becomes known through City traffic counts or submittal from an interested party that indicates a substantial change in an intersection traffic level beyond the 26 identified intersections, the standard analysis for environmental review could be augmented.

3. Monitoring and Update Procedure. The group would like to know how the City will monitor the performance of the intersections identified in the thresholds over time and how often the General Plan assessment would be updated. For example, will intersection performance only be reviewed when sufficient fees have been collected to update the model?

Response: Following the 2008 citywide traffic counts, traffic levels have dipped during the economic downturn. The amount of net new development generating more traffic has also been very low since that time. Traffic levels are gradually increasing. It is estimated that about 1.25% traffic growth due to land development would represent a substantial change to traffic levels. When this amount of traffic growth occurs, re-calibrating the traffic model will yield a more accurate future baseline. The Traffic Model Data Collection fee, established in July 2013 will accumulate in direct relationship to the amount of new traffic generated by land developments. The accumulation of fees equaling the amount of funding needed for a citywide traffic evaluation would occur at the point approximately 1.25% of traffic growth occurs. At that time, new citywide traffic counts will be conducted and the traffic model re-calibrated. This will establish an updated future traffic baseline, and the traffic model will be recalibrated and, as needed, the list of 26 intersections updated.

Year to year, some traffic information is collected. The Transportation Division conducts traffic counts at various locations to update traffic levels at intersections that appear to be changing, or as input to Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) regional transportation and congestion management planning. Model runs using the City model will be done as needed for individual project proposals or City projects. Other material changes to the transportation system or land use patterns could justify a recalibration of the model (e.g., completion of the 101 HOV project, City adoption of parking pricing or other transportation mitigation measures, etc.) The Planning Division also continues tracking land use development as part of the General Plan Growth Management and Adaptive Management Programs.

4. Un-signalized Intersections. The new thresholds do not address un-signalized intersections. How will the City approach the impact analysis?

Response: The proposed traffic threshold addresses both signalized and non-signalized intersections, and both types of intersections are on the threshold list of intersections. Both types of intersections are measured the same way: an impact will occur if project traffic uses 1% of the total intersection capacity. Traffic contributions to non-signalized intersections that are not identified on the list of intersections would not constitute a significant environmental impact under CEQA because those intersections are not anticipated to be significantly impacted now or in the future.

The regulatory process in place for determining signal warrants would continue to be used as applicable. Under that process, some projects in close proximity to a non-signalized intersection will be required to provide site-specific traffic analysis and engineering, and, in some cases, roadway improvements. In some cases, this could result in a requirement to signalize an un-signalized intersection.

5. Mitigation Measures. The new thresholds do not discuss mitigation measures that could be considered for the identified locations. Are there any anticipated?

Response: The new threshold provides criterion defining a significant project-specific impact for CEQA environmental review purposes. If significant traffic impacts are anticipated, under CEQA and City policy, mitigation measures need to be proposed to reduce traffic impacts. These may range from physical roadway improvements to contributions to traffic mitigation funding to use of alternative transportation strategies to project land use or size changes.

As a largely built out city, there are not always roadway improvements available as mitigation. The General Plan Program EIR (*Volume 1, Section 16, Transportation Impact T-1*) identified roadway improvement mitigations, including full mitigation for some intersections, and strategies for partial mitigation of numerous other intersections.

In the General Plan Circulation Element, Policy C6-Circulation Improvements also directs that roadway improvements and other measures such as transportation demand management (TDM) should be done when congestion occurs. Implementation Action C6.1 directs installation of traffic signals or roundabouts at specified intersections. Implementation Action C6.2 directs development of a program identifying feasible improvements and funding sources for problem intersections. The Transportation Division will be developing this General Plan intersection improvement/traffic mitigation program during the next fiscal year.

Additional Circulation Element programs that provide mitigation approaches for traffic congestion include:

- C1.1 – Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure
- C1.2 – Personal Transportation (e.g., car share)
- C1.3 - Intermodal Connections
- C1.4 – Optimize Capacity (ITS strategies)
- C1.5 – Mid Block Traffic Flow Improvements
- C2.1 – Regional Transportation Networks
- C2.3 – Improved Transit Frequency
- C6.3 – Transit Pass Program
- C6.4 – Cash-Out Parking
- C6.5 – Downtown Parking Pricing
- C6.7 – Carpooling and Telecommuting
- C7 – Parking Management implementation programs

6. Definition of V/C Ratio Change. Please define how the V/C ratio increases will be determined in the thresholds (rounding issue).

Response: The proposed project-specific traffic threshold is measured using the project traffic distributed to an intersection. If the project uses 1% or more of capacity of that intersection, an impact is expected to occur. Analysis that shows project traffic using less than 1% will not be rounded to 1%. Importantly, no measurement of existing traffic volumes is needed and only project traffic is distributed to make a determination. In other words, the analysis of project related traffic distributed to the subject intersection is not added to any other traffic

7. Traffic Credits. Please clarify how traffic credits will work from a CEQA perspective. How long do traffic credits live for properties that are vacant for the proposed project-specific thresholds?

Response: Trip credits would continue to be applied. Environmental impacts of projects are considered as net changes.

- *Existing Uses.* Current traffic generated on a project site constitutes trip credits that are subtracted from traffic generation of the proposed project to identify the net traffic change. Existing buildings (occupied or not) are assumed to generate an average Santa Barbara trip rate for that use.
- *Past Uses.* Trip credits would generally be applied for past uses on the site in place during the citywide baseline traffic counts (2008) until the next citywide traffic counts and model run update. Once the new traffic counts are performed, a demolished building is no longer accounted for in the traffic analysis.
- *Approved but Unbuilt Uses/ Revised Project.* Per CEQA Guidelines 15162-15164, tiering/ staging provisions, and case law, CEQA review of a subsequent discretionary permit for some revised projects is limited to net additional impacts not previously evaluated in CEQA review of original project. Prior project impact is essentially a trip credit. This only applies with a prior EIR or ND (cannot “tier” off an Exemption). There are some case law differences for providing credits on new projects vs. revised projects.

8. Updated Land Use Scenario. Does the City anticipate updating the General Plan Build-out traffic analysis to reflect the scenario that was approved by the City? It seems that this scenario should be the basis for the intersection list in the new thresholds rather than the No-Project Alternative.

Response:

The final adopted build-out scenario will be included in the first traffic model re-calibration, expected to occur in the next 2-4 years. At that time, staff anticipates that the number of impacted intersections will change as a result of the more accurate projection, because some of the 26 intersections have been improved, and/or because some external event has changed/increased/decreased traffic volumes and/or patterns.

**ASSOCIATED TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERS**

100 N. Hope Avenue, Suite 4, Santa Barbara, CA 93110 • (805) 687-4418 • FAX (805) 682-8509

Since 1978

Richard L. Pool, P.E.
Scott A. Schell, AICP, PTP

May 9, 2014

Honorable City Council
City of Santa Barbara
735 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93110**CITY OF SANTA BARBARA PROPOSED TRAFFIC IMPACT THRESHOLDS -
STAKEHOLDER GROUP INPUT**

A local stakeholders group comprised of engineers, planners, architects and attorneys has been working with City staff over the last several months in reviewing and refining the proposed traffic impact thresholds that will be considered by the City Council at an upcoming hearing. During this period, City staff met with members of the stakeholders group on several occasions to discuss the group's questions and concerns regarding the new thresholds. Staff then provided a detailed written response to the questions which clarified how the new procedures will be implemented.

With these responses and clarifications, the stakeholders group is in support of the proposed traffic impact thresholds. At the same time, we recommend that City staff follow up with the anticipated Traffic Analysis Guidelines that will provide details on how the new program is to be implemented. It will also be important to maintain an active adaptive management approach that provides updates to the Council and the public on how the program is working in the future.

We would like thank City staff for working with the stakeholders group to explain the new procedures and policies.

Santa Barbara Stakeholders Group

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott A. Schell', written in a cursive style.

Scott A. Schell, AICP, PTP
Associated Transportation Engineers

Lisa Plowman
Peikert + RRM Design Group

Steven Amerikaner
Brownstein, Hyatt, Farber, Schreck

Ken Marshall, AICP
Dudek

Graham Lyons
Mullen & Henzel

Trish Allen
Suzanne Elledge Planning & Permitting Services

City of Santa Barbara Traffic Analysis Guidelines (Draft Outline)

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Traffic Evaluation as a Part of Land Development Review
- 1.2 The 2011 General Plan EIR as a Basis for Traffic Review
- 1.3 Santa Barbara's Traffic Model
- 1.4 Traffic Management Strategy
 - 1.4.1 Land Development Areas

2.0 Traffic Impact Thresholds and Evaluation Standards

- 2.1 Cumulative Traffic Analysis
- 2.2 Project Specific Threshold
 - 2.2.1 2030 Impacted Intersection List
 - 2.2.2 On-going Adjustments to the Impacted Intersection List
- 2.3 Airport Area Traffic Evaluation
- 2.4 Site-Related Traffic Evaluation

3.0 Project Submittal Requirements

- 3.1 Vicinity Map
- 3.2 Project Description
- 3.3 Site Plan

4.0 Preliminary Traffic Analysis

- 4.1 Cumulative Impacts
- 4.2 Establishing the Existing Conditions
 - 4.2.1 Using the Average Trip Generation of a Land Use Type
 - 4.2.2 Vacant Parcels
 - 4.2.3 Unoccupied Buildings
- 4.3 Proposed Development
 - 4.3.1 Transfer of Development Rights
 - 4.3.2 Change of Land Use
 - 4.3.3 Trip Generation Rates
- 4.4 Potential Traffic Impact Evaluation
 - 4.4.1 Trip Distribution
 - 4.4.2 Traffic Model Run Determination

5.0 Traffic Model Evaluation and Further Environmental Review

- 5.1 Traffic Model Run Process, Fee, Timing
- 5.2 Technical Traffic Impact Determination Memo
 - 5.2.1 Volume-to-Capacity Ratios
 - 5.2.2 Non-signalized Intersection Evaluation
- 5.3 Potential Traffic Mitigation
 - 5.3.1 Project Scope Reduction

- 5.3.2 Intersection Mitigation
- 5.3.3 Programmatic Mitigation
- 5.4 Environmental Impact Report
 - 5.4.1 Using the General Plan Program EIR
 - 5.4.2 Supplemental Evaluation
 - 5.4.3 Overriding Considerations

6.0 Traffic Model Updates and Monitoring

- 6.1 Adoptive Management Plan
- 6.2 Traffic Model Data Collection Fee
- 6.3 Traffic Model Updates
 - 6.3.1 Accounting for New Intersections
 - 6.3.2 Plan Horizon Year
- 6.4 On-Going Traffic Volume Monitoring
- 6.5 Adjustments to the Project Specific Impact List of Intersections



Adoption Of Updated Traffic Impact Significance Thresholds

City Council
June 3, 2014

2011 General Plan EIR

2030 Impacted Intersections





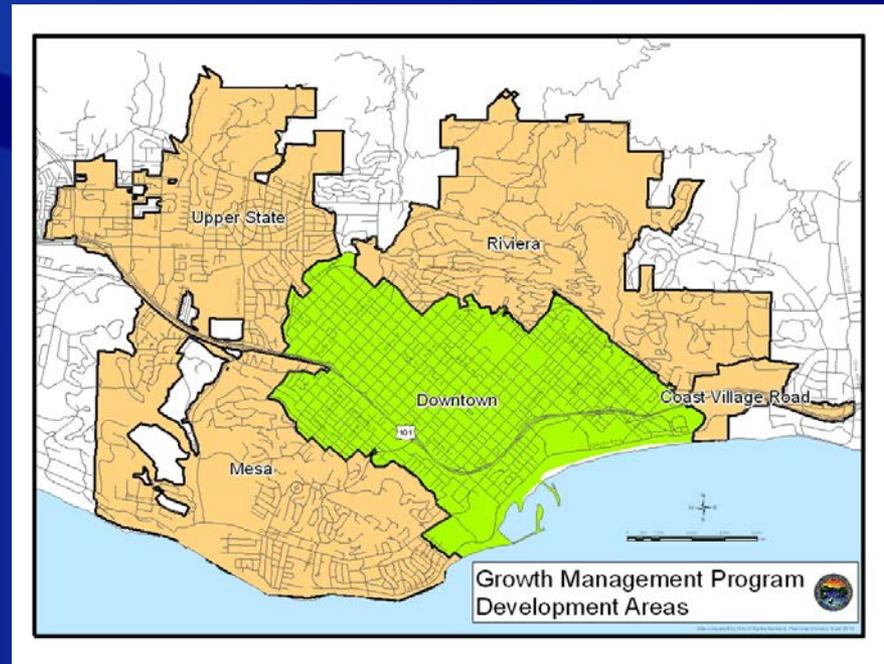
Traffic Management Strategy

Primary Goal:

“...to utilize existing transportation capacity efficiently and to reserve constrained transportation capacity for high priority land uses.”

Traffic Management Strategy

- ◆ Limit Development within Outlying Areas
- ◆ Focused Land Development Growth within the street grid
- ◆ Streamline Land Development Traffic Review





Traffic Management Strategy

Most projects get the green light:

“City Council determined this cumulative impact to be acceptable and consistent with the General Plan.”



Traffic Management Strategy

Identifies the Project Specific Impact level as too much traffic:

“...because a single project is using a disproportionate share of the remaining roadway capacity.”



Traffic Management Strategy

Existing Project-Specific Threshold:

- ◆ Increase V/C ratio at an intersection to greater than 0.77, or would increase the V/C ratio by 0.01 or more when an intersection is already operating at greater than 0.77 V/C ratio during peak hours.



Traffic Management Strategy

Updated Project-Specific Threshold:

- ◆ Traffic generation would constitute 1% or more of the intersection capacity at one or more of the follow intersections:
- ◆ Listed Intersections

2011 General Plan EIR 2030 Impacted Intersections





Traffic Management Strategy

Cumulative Threshold:

- ◆ Wording retained

Airport Area:

- ◆ Not subject to the updated traffic threshold
- ◆ Coordination with County, City of Goleta, and Caltrans



Traffic Impact Assessment

Cumulative Threshold:

- ◆ Overridden by City Council – 2011 General Plan EIR

Project-Specific Threshold:

- ◆ Staff question: could project possibly have a Project-Specific Traffic Impact?
- ◆ If yes, City Traffic Model Run



Traffic Levels Over Time

Traffic Analysis Fee:

- ◆ City wide traffic counts
- ◆ Traffic Model Validation

Adaptive Management Program:

- ◆ Evaluate Traffic Management Strategy
- ◆ Adjust number of intersections in Project-Specific Threshold
- ◆ Mitigation Plan



Work with Stakeholders

- ◆ Concerns raised at the November hearing
- ◆ Series of meetings held
- ◆ Written Q & A
- ◆ Traffic Analysis Guidelines