



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

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To: Board of Supervisors

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Subject: SB 743 Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Quick Glance Guide

The Department of Transportation is providing the attached SB 743 & El Dorado County flyer as a quick glance guide to SB 743. SB 743 changes the way transportation impacts for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) are determined. The environmental impacts from new trips generated by a development project will no longer be quantified based on delay or level of service (LOS) but upon the metric of vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The change is intended to capture the impacts of driving on the environment rather than the impact of delay on drivers.

The quick glance guide provides the basic information regarding SB 743. This includes:

- What does SB 743 do?
- What is the legislative intent?
- What does this mean for projects?
- What does SB 743 implementation look like in El Dorado County?
- What are potential mitigation types?

Even though the CEQA requirements have changed to VMT, it does not remove the requirement of a project to be consistent with the El Dorado County General Plan LOS thresholds. Two separate analyses will be required for transportation – one for CEQA and one for General Plan consistency.

Transportation is working on updating the Transportation Impact Study Guidelines to incorporate the new CEQA requirements. The CEQA guidelines and Governor's Office of Planning and Research State of California (State OPR) Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA do provide some opportunities for streamlining projects. The types of projects that are presumed to not have a significant impact on VMT include active transportation, transit and affordable housing. Some types of projects may be screened based on the State OPR Technical Advisory, including: road maintenance or road safety device installation, roundabouts, projects with fewer than 10 peak hour trips, local serving retail under 50,000 square feet, and projects located in low VMT generating areas.

The Board of Supervisors will need to adopt significance thresholds and methodology to facilitate implementation of the VMT impact analysis in El Dorado County. Transportation intends to rely on the State OPR recommendations with some modifications to address local features such as our community regions.

In the coming months, Transportation will be identifying potential mitigation strategies and facilities and then developing a program to allow implementation. SACOG is looking at a regional program which would allow local projects to contribute to regional solutions. Local strategies could include increasing the diversity of land uses, providing pedestrian network improvements, providing traffic calming measures and low-stress bicycle network improvements, implementing a car-sharing program, increasing transit service frequency and speed, encouraging telecommuting and alternative work schedules, providing ride-sharing programs, and increasing the use of intelligent transportation systems.

Questions regarding VMT can be directed to Department of Transportation staff Natalie Porter at natalie.porter@edcgov.us or Planning Department Deputy Director Robert Peters at robert.peters@edcgov.us.