Module 3 – VMT Mitigation & Steps to Policy Adoption

ASSOCIATION OF BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FEHR PEERS

Cohort: Santa Clara County

Presented by: Meghan Weir & Sahar Shirazi

Dates: September 19, 2022

Agenda

1. Introduction & Review
2. VMT Mitigation

   Break *(5 min)*
3. Policy Adoption & Implementation Considerations
4. Next Steps

Source: Wikimedia Commons

Introduction

1

Ground Rules

- Be an active participant – Let's learn from each other!
- Keep your video on if possible
- Ask questions by using the raise hand function or use the chat
- Take turns speaking and give others a chance to speak up, please mute when not speaking

Remember, this is **not** a webinar, we want it to be interactive!

Purpose & Goals of Technical Assistance

- VMT policy adoption is required for compliance with SB743
  - Promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions
  - Promote the development of multi-modal transportation networks
  - Promote a diversity of land uses
- Help you create VMT policies that support local values and other policies/goals (housing elements, climate action, etc.)
- Streamline VMT analysis for common land uses, and provide a framework for analyzing unique land uses

This TA program is designed to help you implement the basic steps through approachable templates and workshops, and free, one-on-one consultation assistance

Curriculum Overview

Phase 1a: Summer/Fall 2022

Phase 1b: Fall/Winter 2022

1

Introduction to SB 743

- Overview of Technical Assistance
- Intro to SB 743 & VMT
- OPR Recommendations

2

Two-Step Adoption: Thresholds and Screens

- Application of VMT metrics, thresholds, and screens to your jurisdiction
- Review VMT data
- Peer examples

3

VMT Mitigation & Policy Adoption

- VMT mitigation concepts
- Available tools
- Adoption strategy and implementation considerations

Implementation Support

- Non-CEQA transportation
- Jurisdiction support
- Mitigation fees, banks, and exchanges

Module 3 Learning Objectives

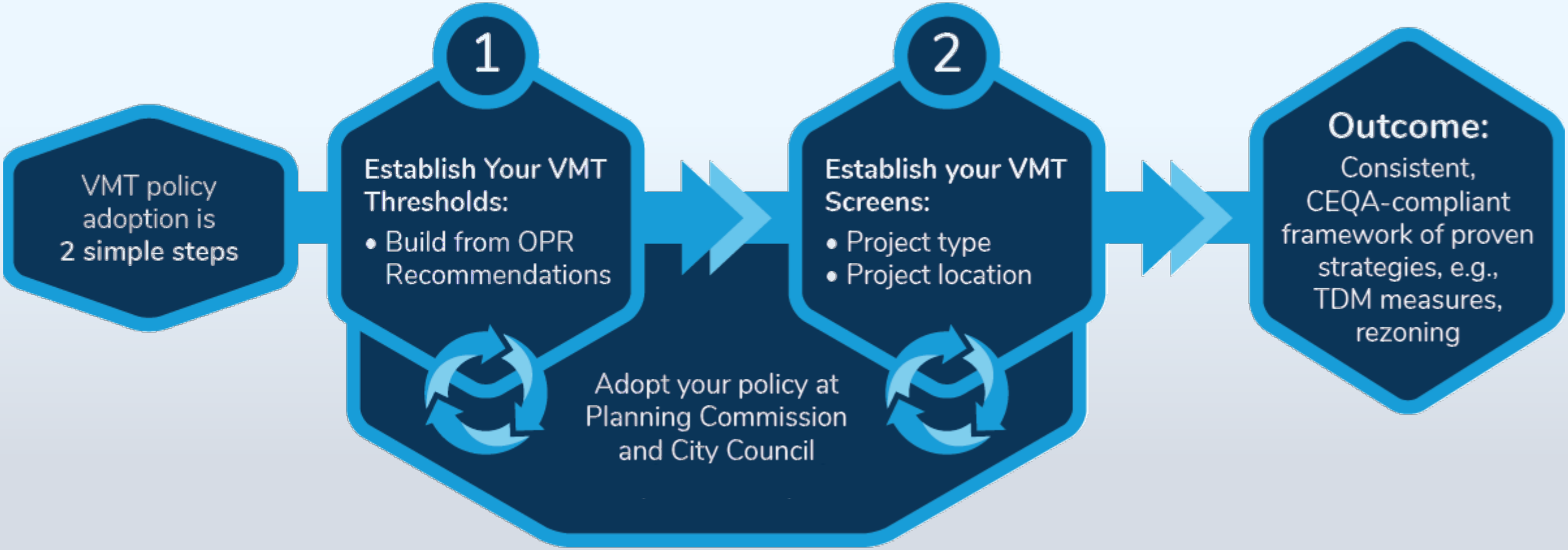
VMT Mitigation

- Understand VMT mitigation concepts and tools for quantifying effectiveness of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures
- Understand what policies you can adopt to support VMT mitigation

VMT Policy Adoption Strategy

- Review process to adopt VMT policy

Module 2 Recap & Group Share



Module 2 Recap & Group Share

Module 2 Memo Template – Group Share:

- Share experiences reviewing and filling out memo templates
- Any successful outcomes during this activity, such as conversations that helped to identify appropriate metrics and thresholds?
- Any challenges that arose during this activity?
- Is anyone ready to adopt these policies?

VMT Mitigation

2

What is VMT Mitigation?

Mitigation: Jurisdictions must investigate and disclose all feasible measures to reduce impacts below the threshold of significance

How to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled?

- Reduce the number of vehicle trips
  - Shift travel to non-driving modes
- Reduce the length of vehicle trips
  - Increase densities or encourage mixed uses

What is Transportation Demand Management (TDM)?

Traditional TDM Approach: On-site programs for employers such as commuter benefits, bicycle parking, etc.

TDM as a tool for VMT Mitigation can include:

- On-site programs for employees, residents, visitors
- On-site or near-site design features supporting active transportation or transit modes
- Parking management
- Community serving infrastructure and programs

Example VMT Mitigation Measures

Site-Specific Features

- Commute trip reduction program
- Price parking or provide parking “cash-out”
- Limit parking supply
- Integrate affordable housing
- Increase residential density
- Provide ridesharing program
- Provide subsidized transit passes

Community-Based Measures

- Provide community-based travel planning
- Charge for public parking
- Provide pedestrian network improvements
- Construct or improve bicycle facilities
- Expand transit network or service
- Improve bus stops and other transit-supportive roadway treatments
- Implement a carshare program
- Implement bike or scooter share program

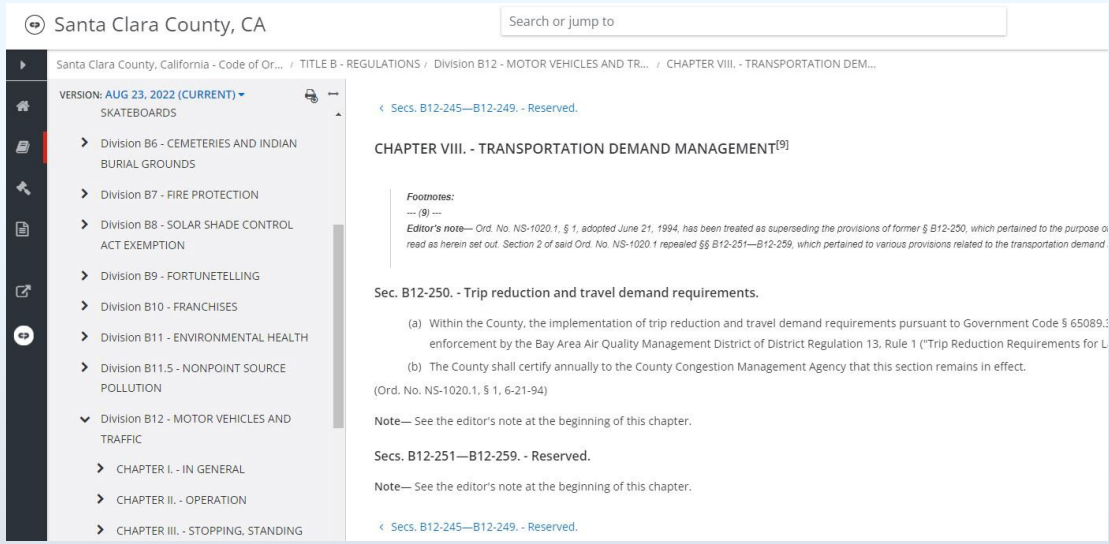
Related Plans & Programs

How is VMT mitigation related to other policies or programs?

- Existing trip reduction ordinances
- Parking & TDM ordinances

→ VMT mitigation can build on existing programs, but quantifying effectiveness should be based on the best available research.

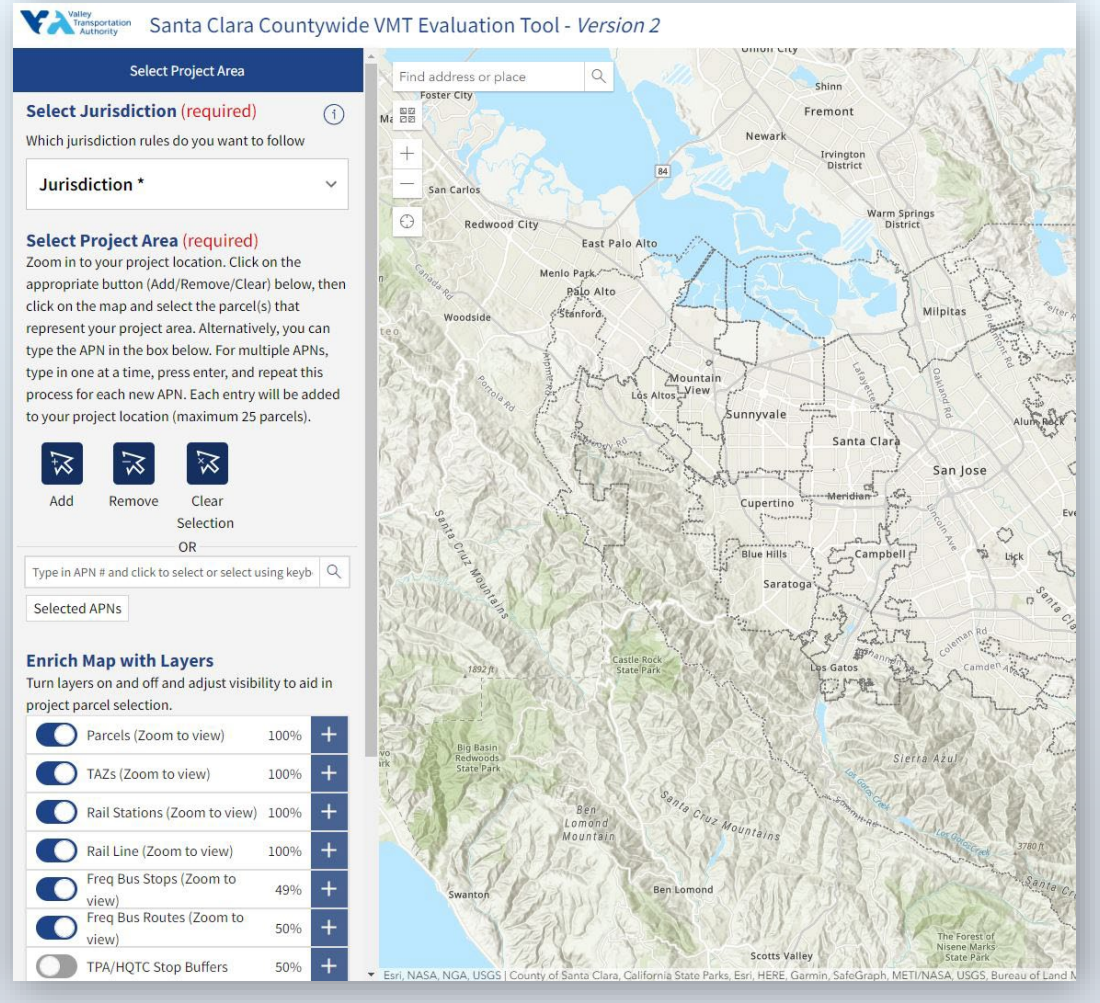
→ Updating existing TDM ordinances is not required



What are some TDM plans, policies or programs that your city already has?

VMT Mitigation Resources

- CAPCOA Handbook Update
- California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod)
- TDM+ tool through Caltrans
- Santa Clara Countywide VMT Evaluation Tool



VMT Mitigation Resources in Santa Clara County - Overview

- VTA developed the Santa Clara Countywide VMT Evaluation Tool, to help screen and evaluate VMT reductions for certain land use projects.
- The SCC VMT Tool is based on the same VMT reduction factors as the San Jose spreadsheet VMT Tool, which draw mainly from the VMT reductions and evidence in the 2010 CAPCOA report.
- The SCC VMT Tool also includes logic to avoid double-counting reductions and apply maximum reductions, based on 2010 CAPCOA and a 2014 UC Davis Study
- Lead Agencies should exercise judgement when using the SCC VMT Tool and consider the updated 2021 CAPCOA Handbook when applying any VMT reductions.

Santa Clara Countywide VMT Evaluation Tool

- VTA, in coordination with Member Agencies, developed a web-based VMT Evaluation Tool (https://vmttool.vta.org) to screen and evaluate VMT generated by land use projects
- Covers three main land uses:
  - Residential
  - Office
  - Industrial
- Intended to be one part of a Lead Agency's land use evaluation process under SB 743
- The tool was launched in May 2020, and Version 2 was released in September 2021

Local VMT Mitigation Approaches in Santa Clara County

- Some jurisdictions in Santa Clara County are taking a program-level approach to VMT mitigations, tied to their General Plans:
  - Los Gatos: VMT impact identified in EIR for 2022 General Plan Update; Town now working on a TIF update to include VMT-reducing measures
  - Cupertino: also working on citywide VMT reduction measures

- San Jose's VMT Policy includes an option for certain projects with Significant and Unavoidable VMT impacts to fund or construct Transportation System Improvements as part of an override

Caltrans grant award: Equitable VMT Mitigation Program for Santa Clara County

- VTA was awarded a Caltrans planning grant for an ‘Equitable VMT Mitigation Program for Santa Clara County’ in April 2022
- Overall goal - develop the framework for a VMT mitigation program (a VMT Exchange or Bank for **land use projects** in Santa Clara County that works in a cross-jurisdictional and equity-focused way
- Promote VMT-reducing measures including multimodal improvements and transportation demand management programs
- Enhance equity by improving travel options, reducing environmental impacts, and enhancing access to economic opportunity for disadvantaged communities
- Project anticipated to begin early 2023

TDM Ordinances in Santa Clara County

- VTA provides limited countywide guidance on TDM, mainly on approaches to documenting / justifying trip reductions, in VTA's 2014 TIA Guidelines
- VTA also provides certain TDM offerings (e.g., SmartPass, vanpool subsidies along with MTC, upcoming Guaranteed Ride Home program), looking at potential expansion
- Numerous cities in Santa Clara County have TDM ordinances for office developments, a few for residential (e.g., Sunnyvale, Mountain View)
- The County has an aggressive trip cap requirement for the Stanford main campus, complemented by Stanford's robust TDM programs
- San Jose is currently working on a Parking and TDM Standards Update

Additional SC County-Specific Resources

- VTA LOS-to-VMT Transition web page:
  https://www.vta.org/projects/level-service-los-vehicle-miles-traveled-vmt-transition
- VTA CMP / VMT Technical Resources web page:
  https://www.vta.org/programs/congestion-management-program/technical-resources
- VMT Tool Quick Start Guide and FAQs (on CMP / VMT page above)
- Microsoft Teams group for announcements / info-sharing, email distribution list
- Contact vta.los.vmt@gmail.com or Rob Swierk with questions

VMT Mitigation Policy

After adopting thresholds and screening criteria, what VMT mitigation guideance should you provide?

Recommended an analytical approach for calculating mitigation effectiveness to remove guesswork:

- Use locally appropriate VMT mitigation tool, if available, or
- Reference resources for effectiveness calculations (e.g., CAPCOA or the latest available TDM research)

VMT Mitigation Policy

What other TDM or mitigation guidance would be helpful?

1. Review local TDM ordinance or requirements and determine if they need to be updated
   - Start by comparing local requirements to the list of CAPCOA measures presented at the end of the Module 2 memorandum

2. Identify off-site mitigation measures when impacts can't be mitigated on-site
   - VMT fee or exchange programs. For more information, see Module 3 memo template.

Discussion

What other questions or concerns do you have about VMT mitigation?

Any questions about the Module 3 memo template?

Break

(5 minutes)

Adoption Strategy & Implementation Considerations

3

Goals for this Program

"Get the basics done first, then tackle the challenging stuff"

1. Streamline VMT analysis for common land uses
2. Establish a basis on which to guide future decisions about more complicated or unique land uses, which would include:

VMT Process for Unique Land Uses

1. Consider typical VMT generation for unique land uses

- Is this a local or regional generator?

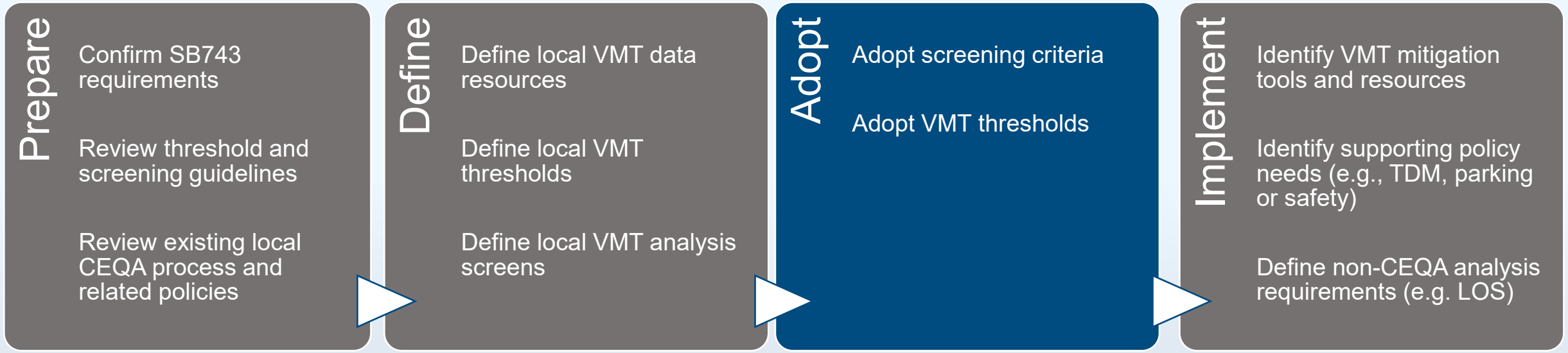
2. Compare to common land uses

- Are they similar to residential, office or retail/services?
- If not, how would the unique land use change to total regional VMT per capita?

3. Flexible approach to setting threshold

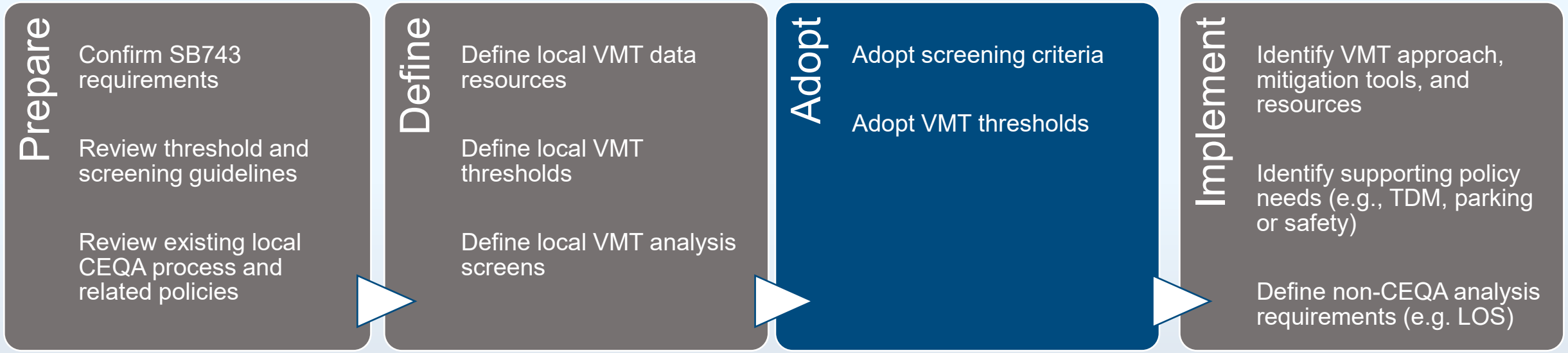
- Address on case-by-case basis
- ID similar land uses and thresholds and document assumptions
- Establish technical guidelines as precedent is set

Steps to SB 743 Compliance



Typical Engagement	*Internal Staff*	*Decision Makers*	*Internal Staff, may need decision maker input*

Steps to SB 743 Compliance

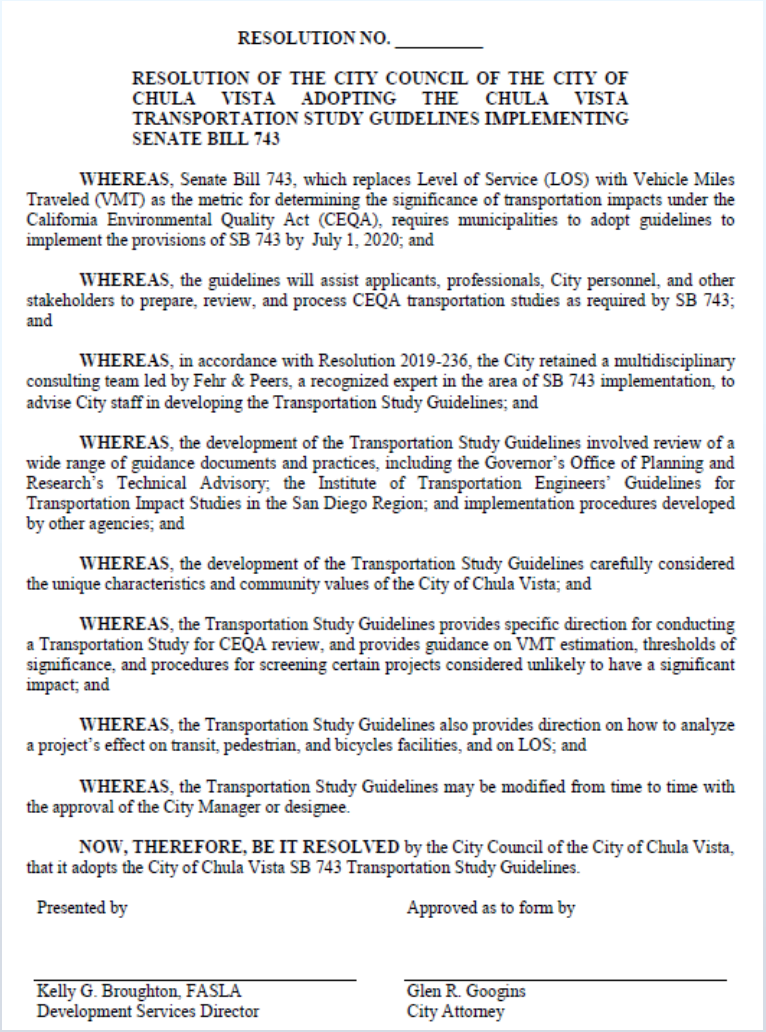


	Typical Engagement	*Internal Staff*	*Decision Makers*	*Internal Staff, may need decision maker input*
Level of Effort ↓	Petaluma, Fremont	Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) or regular cross-department internal teams reviewed details	Planning Commission & Council study sessions and adoption hearings	Local VMT mitigation, TDM ordinance, transportation review guidelines to address CEQA and non-CEQA
	Milpitas, Vacaville	Staff reports based on internal discussions	Planning Commission & Council presentation	General Plans used to evaluate other related policies

Steps to Adoption: Engaging Decision Makers

TA Materials:

- **Presentations:** Short council adoption or long study session
- **Staff reports and resolutions:** Templates and policy adoption language
- **Internal guidance documents**



RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHULA VISTA ADOPTING THE CHULA VISTA TRANSPORTATION STUDY GUIDELINES IMPLEMENTING SENATE BILL 743

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 743, which replaces Level of Service (LOS) with Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) as the metric for determining the significance of transportation impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), requires municipalities to adopt guidelines to implement the provisions of SB 743 by July 1, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the guidelines will assist applicants, professionals, City personnel, and other stakeholders to prepare, review, and process CEQA transportation studies as required by SB 743; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Resolution 2019-236, the City retained a multidisciplinary consulting team led by Fehr & Peers, a recognized expert in the area of SB 743 implementation, to advise City staff in developing the Transportation Study Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the development of the Transportation Study Guidelines involved review of a wide range of guidance documents and practices, including the Governor's Office of Planning and Research's Technical Advisory; the Institute of Transportation Engineers' Guidelines for Transportation Impact Studies in the San Diego Region; and implementation procedures developed by other agencies; and

WHEREAS, the development of the Transportation Study Guidelines carefully considered the unique characteristics and community values of the City of Chula Vista; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Study Guidelines provides specific direction for conducting a Transportation Study for CEQA review, and provides guidance on VMT estimation, thresholds of significance, and procedures for screening certain projects considered unlikely to have a significant impact; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Study Guidelines also provides direction on how to analyze a project's effect on transit, pedestrian, and bicycles facilities, and on LOS; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Study Guidelines may be modified from time to time with the approval of the City Manager or designee.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Chula Vista, that it adopts the City of Chula Vista SB 743 Transportation Study Guidelines.

Presented by

Kelly G. Broughton, FASLA
Development Services Director

Approved as to form by

Glen R. Googins
City Attorney

What additional documents, tools, or resources would support you in moving forward with VMT policy adoption?

Review Public-Facing Materials

Next Steps

4

What's Next

- Feedback survey
- Office hours – *October 6, 2022 – 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.*
  - *"Learn from an early adopter"*
  - *VMT mitigation tools*
  - *Walk through memo templates and public-facing materials*
- Module 4 – *October 19, 2022 – 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.*

Thank you!

Meghan Weir, Nelson\Nygaard: mweir@nelsonnygaard.com
Sahar Shirazi, Nelson\Nygaard: sshirazi@nelsonnygaard.com

Krute Singa, MTC/ABAG
Ksinga@bayareametro.gov