



Fremont City Council

3300 Capitol Avenue
Fremont, CA 94538

SCHEDULED

Meeting: 11/12/19 06:00 PM

Div/Dept: Planning

Category: Plans, Policies and Studies

STAFF REPORT (ID # 3929)

Sponsors:

DOC ID: 3929 A

SB743 WORK SESSION - CITYWIDE - To Receive a Presentation and Hold a Work Session on SB743 - Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA.

Contact Persons:

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Executive Summary: Staff and transportation consultant Nelson\Nygaard will present information about SB743, a new State requirement that Level of Service (i.e., traffic delay) no longer constitutes a significant environmental effect under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and changes to the CEQA Guidelines that identify Vehicle Miles Traveled (i.e., vehicle usage) as the most appropriate metric to evaluate a project's transportation impacts.

BACKGROUND: Senate Bill 743 (Steinberg, 2013), which was codified in Public Resources Code section 21099, required changes to the guidelines implementing CEQA (CEQA Guidelines) regarding the analysis of transportation impacts. The CEQA Guidelines are the regulations that explain and interpret the law for both the public agencies required to administer CEQA and for the public generally. The Guidelines provide objectives, criteria and procedures for the orderly evaluation of projects and the preparation of environmental impact reports, negative declarations, and mitigated negative declarations by public agencies. The Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) prepares and develops proposed amendments to the CEQA Guidelines. The California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) is responsible for certification and adoption of the CEQA Guidelines and amendments thereto.

Pursuant to Section 21099, the criteria for determining the significance of transportation impacts must "promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses." To that end, in developing the criteria, the OPR proposed, and the CNRA has certified and adopted, changes to the CEQA Guidelines that identify vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as the most appropriate metric to evaluate a project's transportation impacts. With the CNRA's certification and adoption of the changes to the CEQA Guidelines, automobile delay, as measured by "level of service" and other similar metrics, generally no longer constitutes a significant environmental effect under CEQA.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS: A presentation will be provided at the beginning of the study session to outline the requirements of SB743, provide a comparison of LOS and VMT-based transportation analysis and outcomes for several example projects, discuss mitigation measures to address potential VMT impacts, and discuss implementation and next steps.

FISCAL IMPACT: None.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW: The presentation and study session are exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines Section 15378, definition of a "project."

RECOMMENDATION: Receive presentation and provide comments.