

City of South San Francisco Significance Thresholds for Transportation

Consistent with State CEQA guidelines section 15064.3, the City of South San Francisco has adopted the thresholds of significance set forth in Table 1 to guide in determining when a project will have a significant transportation impact.

Table 1
Vehicle Miles Traveled VMT Impact Thresholds

Project Type	Threshold (when screening does not apply)
Land Use Plan	A significant impact would occur if the plan would result in a net increase in Total VMT <i>and</i> VMT per capita ¹ is more than 15% above the applicable Baseline VMT ² .
Land Use Project (non-retail)	A significant impact would occur if the VMT ¹ for the project would be 15% below the applicable Baseline VMT ² .
Retail Project	The project would result in a net increase in Total VMT.
Transportation Project	The project would result in a net increase in Total VMT.

Note:

1. VMT to be reported as VMT per Service Population, VMT per resident, or VMT per employee.
2. Baseline VMT is defined as the nine-county Bay Area average for total, residential, or employee VMT.

Certain projects may qualify for VMT screening based on the criteria presented in Table 2. Projects screened from requiring a VMT analysis would not have an impact under State CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 and can be discussed qualitatively. The following activities generally will not require a TIA that includes VMT. This presumption is based on the substantial evidence provided in the OPR Technical Advisory supporting SB 743 implementation or is related to projects that are local serving which, by definition, would decrease the number of trips or the distance those trips travel to access the development (and are VMT-reducing projects).

Table 2
Vehicle Miles Traveled Screening Options

Screening Category	Screening Criteria
Project type screening	Presumed less than significant impact for: • Local-serving K-12 schools and day care centers • Local parks • Local-serving banks • Local-serving hotels (e.g. non-destination hotels) • Local-serving retail projects (defined as less than 50,000 square feet per OPR's Technical Advisory) • 100 percent affordable residential developments • Local serving community colleges that are consistent with the assumptions noted in the RTP/SCS • Projects generating less than 110 daily vehicle trips.¹ This generally corresponds to the following "typical" development potentials: ☐ 11 single family housing units ☐ 16 multi-family, condominiums, or townhouse housing units ☐ 10,000 sq. ft. of office ☐ 15,000 sq. ft. of light industrial² ☐ 63,000 sq. ft. of warehousing²
Low VMT area screening	Presumed less than significant VMT impact for residential and office projects located in low VMT areas. These areas generate total daily VMT that is 15% less than the Baseline VMT. In South San Francisco, there are many low VMT residential areas and no low VMT office areas.

¹ This threshold ties directly to the OPR technical advisory and notes that CEQA provides a categorical exemption for existing facilities, including additions to existing structures of up to 10,000 square feet, so long as the project is in an area where public infrastructure is available to allow for maximum planned development and the project is not in an environmentally sensitive area. (CEQA Guidelines, § 15301, subd. (e)(2).) Typical project types for which trip generation increases relatively linearly with building footprint (i.e., general office building, single tenant office building, office park, and business park) generate or attract an additional 110-124 trips per 10,000 square feet. Therefore, absent substantial evidence otherwise, it is reasonable to conclude that the addition of 110 or fewer trips could be considered not to lead to a significant impact.

² Threshold may be higher depending on the use of the site; however, if an alternate threshold is used it is to be memorialized through a use restriction placed on the site through agreement with the project applicant. This number was estimated using rates from ITE's Trip Generation Manual.

High-quality transit area screening	Presumed less than significant VMT impact for projects located within ½-mile of high-quality transit that do not have the following characteristics: ○ Floor Area Ratio (FAR) < 0.75 ○ More parking than required by City ○ Inconsistent with the applicable SCAG RTP/SCS (as determined by the City) ○ Replacing affordable housing units with market-rate units In South San Francisco, the high-quality transit definition is currently limited to service provided by Samtrans routes 130 and ECR.
Transportation projects	Transportation projects that promote non-auto travel, improve safety, or improve traffic operations at current bottlenecks, such as transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, intersection traffic control (e.g., traffic signals or roundabouts), or widening at intersections to provide new turn lanes.