



CEAC Land Use Policy Committee

Wednesday, April 15, 2020|9:00 am - 10:30 am

MINUTES

Chair – Trisha Tillotson, Nevada County
Vice Chair – Stephanie Holloway, Placer County
Vice Chair – Warren Lai, Contra Costa County

9:00 am I. **Welcome, Self- Introductions, and Opening Remarks**

9:10 am II. **Rule 20A Program Update**

Update provided by Mr. Tamone Norimoto, PG&E Rule 20 Manager

- Submit comments to the CPUC – Due April 21, 2020
- Reallocation of work credits from inactive to active communities occurring
- Considered “Inactive” if no projects have been started or completed since 2011
- PG&E is performing essential work only to limit outages as much as possible during this pandemic
- PG&E is hardening their system in fire prone areas.

County’s are concerned about:

- Sunset of Rule 20A projects
- Allowing Safety and Fire related projects
- Disadvantages for rural counties including requiring counties to be the lead on undergrounding projects
- Copy CEAC Land Use Committee on comments to CPUC
- Contra Costa and Santa Cruz Counties provided copies of their comment letters for reference

9:45 am III. **Vehicle Miles Travelled – Case Studies and Discussion on Implementation**

Presentation provided by Vice Chair, Stephanie Holloway, Placer County – See attached summary

For a rural example, Nevada County Transportation Commission has completed a draft VMT Implementation plan available at:

<http://www.nctc.ca.gov/Projects/SB-743-VMT/index.html>

10:10 am IV. **CEAC Legislative Priorities for FY 20/21**

- Continue CEAC Priorities from 2019-20 including supporting infrastructure funding and streamlining CEQA
- Current Land Use Bills AB 3155, AB 2666 and AB 3234 are concerning for unincorporated areas where significant infrastructure and safety improvements are often necessary for small subdivisions. The committee recommends the



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proposed bills be modified to impact incorporated areas only.

10:20 am V.

Focus of Land Use Policy Committee Discussion

The Committee would like to change its name to entice more involvement as there seems to be a misconception that it only involves Planning. The Committee Chair and Vice-Chairs are soliciting new name ideas and will submit those to the Board soon.

10:30 am IV.

Other Items & Adjournment

CEAC – VMT Presentation

- **Introduction/Purpose**

- Good Morning everyone and thank you for joining us on this call.
- I have been asked to give a brief presentation Vehicle Miles Travelled related to on implementation of SB 743 as we march towards the July 1, 2020 deadline.
- My intent here is to give you a quick overview from a local agency perspective, present a few case studies and open up for discussion among the group.
- Many of your agencies as most likely either in the middle of development of policy and guidance around SB 743 or have already adopted.
- I want to highlight that as we have worked through this topic in the last 8 months, I can honestly say that current industry thinking around many of the elements related to implementation have and continue to evolve and that I am sure we all fully expect this to continue as we move past the July 1, 2020 implementation date.

- **Legislative Intent**

- SB 743 was signed into law in 2013. The legislation requires lead agencies to shift from analyzing Level of Service (or congestion) to Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) in CEQA documents.
- The Governor's Office of Planning and Research (or OPR) has updated CEQA Guidelines and issued a Technical Advisory on this subject. But lead agencies also have discretion to establish our own metrics and thresholds.
- OPR recognizes three main goals of SB 743: GHG reductions, Active transportation, promotion of infill and land use diversity.

- **The SHIFT: LOS to VMT**

- Transportation analysis under CEQA is changing with SB 743, traffic congestion is no longer an impact
- The focus under CEQA is no longer on reducing vehicle congestion and “building out way out” of traffic impacts, but rather includes all modes of transportation
- CEQA documents can no longer analyze transportation impacts as a matter of delay (or LOS)
- LOS is still a tool however for designing roadway networks and adding capacity to the road network and can continue to be used on a General Plan or Community Plan level
- In most cases, LOS does not however incentivize three things, which align with the legislative intent of 743:
 - Infill & diverse land uses

- GHG reductions
 - Develop multi-modal transportation networks
- The biggest difference in LOS and VMT reside in our land use planning concepts, encouraging a jobs/housing balance.
- Additionally, mitigation measures for projects vary widely. To mitigate LOS impacts, we've historically asked for increases in roadway capacity and/or payment of traffic fees towards our Capital Improvement Program. To mitigate VMT impacts, we'll be looking for strategies that reduce the number of automobile trips and the length of those trips. We recognize that sometimes these mitigation measures will conflict with each other.
- **What do we need to do before July 1, 2020? 4 Decision Elements**
 - First → Metric:
 - There are a variety of different options and ways to present VMT, dependent on the type of the project, location, size, etc.
 - Total VMT
 - Efficiency Metric – VMT/Capita or VMT/Service Pop.
 - An agency might want to focus on Household VMT or Work VMT
 - These types of metric typically require a travel forecasting model.
 - Second → Methodology:
 - Can range from a qualitative discussion to a detailed analysis. SACSIM, Placer VMT tool, project effect is preferred, but recognize that won't be feasible for some projects to produce.
 - Third → Do you want to Screening projects?
If so, OPR has some guidance in this:
 - Projects under 110 average daily trips
 - Affordable housing
 - Local serving retail under 50,000 square feet
 - Projects with access to high-quality transit service
 - Projects located in low VMT generating areasPLACER additional:
 - Locally-serving recreational amenities (e.g. parks, libraries, bike trails, etc.)
 - VMT threshold (based on research going on within our MPO discussions)
 - Lastly → Threshold - how much VMT should be considered a significant impact?
 - State Recommended:
 - ARB, OPR, and most recently Caltrans - 15% below Baseline
 - Locally Developed:
 - most applicable for jurisdictions where a "one-size fits all" approach that is recommended by OPR through the technical advisory does not recognize the diversity in our land use patterns in some contexts. I want to underscore that the basis for findings of a local threshold would still meet the overall intent of SB 743.

- **Case Studies**

- 1. **20 unit Single Family Subdivision**

- We tested this development in the **suburban** context of our North Auburn area (established community with a mix of land use type; residential and jobs)
 - The results of this development were 24.8% below the unincorporated County average.
 - We also tested this development in a **rural** context (outside a community plan boundary)
 - The results were greatly different, 8.7% below the unincorporated County average
 - Takeaway: Location matters. Although this subdivision might generate more than the 110 trips per day, it could have a benefit to VMT reduction is located in the correct land use context.

- 2. **Amendment to a Specific Planned Development**

- We wanted to ask the question on whether adjustment to the “mix” of residential and commercial might have a positive or negative effect on VMT.
 - Approved project: 250 high to medium density residential with 250,000 square feet of commercial.
 - Proposed change: change the 250 high density to 185 low density and reduce the commercial from 250 ksf to 100 ksf commercial.
 - Takeaway: The metric matters.
 - What's right answer? **It Depends**: both scenarios exceed the County VMT/SP average (**BAD**); however Total VMT went down significantly (**GOOD**)... mostly due to the drop in commercial square footage (VMT/employee).

- **Closing**

- Context matters and therefore a “one size fits all” might be appropriate for uniform large cities, it might not fully achieve all the competing goals related to both environmental and mobility planning in the outlier areas of our State.
 - As I mentioned earlier, we fully expect the metric, methodologies, and thresholds to change over time, in response to new technologies, case law, etc.

- **Questions**

- Is this there anybody out there thinking development of local thresholds?
 - How about metrics?
 - Guidance from Caltrans at local level?
 - Is there any agency looking at “visitors” as a portion of their service population (i.e. tourism)?