

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM

Meeting Date: September 5, 2023
To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director
Subject: Vehicle-Miles Traveled (VMT) Threshold Project
Recommendation: Receive Presentation, Provide Input to Staff
Funding: Currently Budgeted: Yes No Not Applicable

Account Code: SRF 247-2102-4210

Costs authorized in City Approved Budget: Yes (Finance Initialed AK) No (Finance Exempt)

INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE:

This meeting is to provide a policy update related to the City's analysis of transportation impact metrics for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to comply with State Law (SB743) related to Greenhouse gas emissions and Vehicle-Miles Traveled.

The City received a grant award for this project from the State, and has retained Fehr & Peers, a transportation engineering/consulting firm, to assist the City with this project. Fehr & Peers has done a significant amount of work for the Sonoma County Transpiration Authority (SCTA), including travel modeling that included the City of Sebastopol and surrounding areas. They have also developed "SB743" screening maps for SCTA which includes VMT tools and screening maps. Working with Fehr & Peers will save money as they have already developed background information on VMT within the County and Sebastopol, including VMT mapping tools (the contract scope reflects this savings already).

The project will review what VMT is, and how it differs from prior (Level of Service, or LOS) analysis; how VMT is used in CEQA; assist the City in developing VMT metrics/thresholds for the City to adopt and additional criteria during VMT review; and, also provide guidance on potential mitigations that could be applied to projects.

BACKGROUND:

The State of California adopted SB743, effective 2020, which shifts transportation impact metrics for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) from vehicle level of service (LOS), a measure of roadway capacity that assigns a letter grade to roadway performance (A to F, similar to scholastic grades), to vehicle-miles traveled (VMT), a metric that accounts for the number of vehicle trips generated and the length or distance of those trips. (See also the following video "What is VMT": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UE4TJItVdJ8>). The shift to VMT changes the focus of CEQA Transportation analysis from "how does a project impact drivers" to "what is the environmental impact of driving resulting from the project."

The switch to the VMT metric will enable the City to more closely align CEQA Transportation section analysis with goals and policies related to sustainability and climate. However, the VMT analysis methods and thresholds present unique challenges for agencies on the periphery of an MPO that are served by limited/infrequent transit services and/or that have a high driving mode share.

Under SB743, the City must decide what level of VMT change caused by a project would constitute a significant transportation impact when a project undergoes CEQA analysis. Currently, VMT needs to be analyzed individually on each project subject to CEQA review under overall State guidelines. Additionally, the City has not identified mitigations that would be appropriate to reduce VMT or screening criteria that would allow projects to be presumed to have a less-than-significant impact on VMT. It is noted that screening of VMT impacts in the CEQA Transportation section is subject to staff approval.

DISCUSSION:

Staff and the consultant, Fehr & Peers, began working with the Planning Commission at their regular meeting of July 25, 2023. At that meeting, the Commission provided direction regarding several options for the City, as noted below:

- For VMT threshold for residential development, the City should utilize the city's baseline VMT (17.1 miles per capita per day) as this is more specific to Sebastopol's needs, and will also allow the City to track progress over time when updates to the baseline are done. This is more appropriate than the regional baseline, which includes mass transit and other resources the City of Sebastopol does not have.
- For VMT threshold for employment-focused development, the City should utilize the Bay Area regional baseline VMT (15.5 miles per capita per day) as this will provide flexibility for workforce location in terms of attracting jobs and businesses to the city.
- For VMT threshold for retail and other service/goods-related development, the City should utilize a net-zero VMT threshold.

This report will include a presentation by staff and the consultant, followed by any questions or discussion by the City Council on the project.

GOALS:

This project supports the General Plan Goals and policies as follows:

Goal CIR 5: Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) in Order to Reduce Congestion and Help Achieve Regional Efforts to Reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions

Policy CIR 5-1: Actively support the Regional Climate Protection Authority (RCPA) in its efforts to reduce GHG emissions and strive to meet its regional goals.

Policy CIR 5-2: Ensure that the City's Trip Reduction Program (Municipal Code Section 8.16) is implemented. The purpose of the City's Trip Reduction ordinance is to reduce traffic and improve air quality within the City of Sebastopol by promoting the development of Trip Reduction Programs (also referred to as Transportation Demand Management Programs, or TDM) at existing and future work sites. Examples of TDM programs may include (but are not limited to) subsidized transit passes, guaranteed ride home, carpool matching, telecommuting, alternative work schedules, car sharing, employer-sponsored

vanpools, priced workplace parking, preferential parking for carpools and/or low-emission vehicles, and shower facilities at workplaces to support bike riding.

Agenda Item Number 8

Policy CIR 5-3: Support the establishment and expansion of a regional network of electric vehicle charging stations and encourage the expanded use of electric vehicles.

Actions in Support of Goal CIR 5

- Action CIR 5a: Supply transportation data to the RCPA as requested to assist in the assessment of GHG reduction efforts.
- Action CIR 5b: Establish specific TDM requirements that is consistent with the City's Trip Reduction Program for projects and consider making requirements sector-based (e.g., residential, commercial, industrial).
- Action CIR 5c: Complete surveys of employment trips as outlined in the City's Trip Reduction Program.
- Action CIR 5d: Establish standards and requirements for electric vehicle parking, including the installation of electric vehicle charging stations, in new development projects.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

As of the writing of this staff report, the City has not received any public comment. However, if staff receives public comment from interested parties following the publication and distribution of this staff report, such comments will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials before or at the meeting. In addition, public comments may be offered during the public comment portion of the agenda item.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

This item was noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to schedule meeting date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Sebastopol City Council receive the report and provide feedback to staff.

Attachments:

Draft Minutes from Planning Commission Meeting on 7-25-2023

General Plan Circulation Element

Related, but not part of this discussion:

If you are interested in learning more about existing travel patterns in Sonoma County and Sebastopol, See SCTA (Sonoma County Transportation Authority):

https://scta.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Sonoma_TBS_2-7-2020_web.pdf

and

<https://scta.ca.gov/library-archive/#toggle-id-12>

7. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

A. VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED PROJECT KICKOFF

Director Svanstrom introduced the item.

Ian Barnes, Principal of Fehr & Peers, and Director Svanstrom gave a presentation and were available for questions.

Vice Chair Fritz asked for Planning Commission questions of the presenter and staff.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

What is the desired outcome of today's meeting? Are we going to get into the details of what you want to do in approaching the mitigation measures or thresholds and things like that, or is this just a presentation and questions?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

This is mostly presentation, but if Commissioners have comments and some direction, that would be great to help us on our way.

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

Absolutely. I know we were talking about there was that 50,000 square foot number and taking it down for retail projects, giving some guidance there. What I have seen commissions do is ask staff to do a little bit of research on the typical types of projects that come through on the retail front and try to work down to those numbers. I've seen that 50,000 number come down to 30,000 or 20,000. Healdsburg is thinking 10,000 for general retail but 30,000 for grocery stores. There are a lot of different ways to slice and dice that number coming down from 50,000 square feet to a more city appropriate number.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

You said they're trying to finish this up by the end of the year, so what is the overall process of what's happening in terms of meetings, decision-making, and implementation?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

We are going to be working with Ian on this and basically want to get input from the Planning Commission, again, if we can get that tonight. Mostly it's what is VMT? Let's make sure everyone understands, because it's an incredibly simple concept, but as Ian talked about, even the transportation consultants had a war on how they're going to calculate it, what it means exactly, and how it's done. For us, moving forward what I see is the State has a 15%. I wouldn't want to go below that because that opens us up to a lot of potential exposure to say 10% is fine. The 15% or more stringent is more what people are doing. I know we're missing our chair tonight, but I can always talk with him as well and make sure he watches the video to get some initial input or questions that you want staff to look into in terms of, like Ian said, what's the typical retail size, like the Exchange Bank was X square feet and that kind of a thing to help you understand what the different dynamics are. For me, the percentages below VMT we need to select whether or not it would be the city level or the regional level for the home-based. I would say confirm that for the office we want to go with the regional level. Then for the retail level of screening out is there a sense tonight on square footage? We won't talk about potential mitigations, projects, or ways in the City to reduce VMT. When the concept of mitigation bank was first proposed at SCTA I was like I know for sure that Sebastopol won't want to pay into something if they don't have projects in that pool as well, and that's because the unofficial Chamber motto is "Think globally, act

locally,” and they’re really going to want to see a reduction of VMT in town, they’re going to want to do something locally as part of those projects, so that’s my sense of where Council and the Commission would want to go with that. But if there are projects like the bicycle lanes that we installed, crosswalks, or other things that would actually be—and this is where Ian can help us—sort of a regional level mitigation bank kind of a project so that when SCTA does develop that we have some thoughts about what those projects might be. That’s kind of the later stages of it, but first is making sure everyone understands VMT, and again, we can still use level of service, particularly when we’re reviewing a project and the specific site circulation around that project. Like for Woodmark, we did an analysis of trips coming out of that site. It’s right at the Robinson/Bodega intersection, so do we need a traffic light, do we need a crosswalk, what do we need there to make sure that the intersection is safe but also that it’s not causing undo delay? We can still do that level of analysis for that project. They’re adding a crosswalk, but for that kind of higher level CEQA stuff where do we want to go in terms of do you have to do a traffic analysis for the trip generation stuff and the vehicle lane (inaudible) trips?

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

Usually where we see the most deviation, as Kari noted, was 15% for residential projects, city versus regional, and for employment does regional make sense? Then the retail screening criteria, what number or what range of numbers makes sense to look at? It’s always tough to pare down to a number in a meeting without further research.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

So we’re going to have this meeting tonight and I assume there is going to be a similar kind of presentation to the Council at some point, and then will you come back to us with a final package of how we’re going to adopt this?

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

Yes. We’re having some of these introductory meetings, because it’s such a deep topic, and getting some initial feedback. Then we will circle back with City staff, have some discussions internally, and then, yes, this would go back to Planning Commission and the Council for formal adoption. That’s a very key step for CEQA, because the Council needs to adopt all general use thresholds of significance by ordinance or resolution, so we will be coming back with recommendations. It would be great to get some initial input tonight, but there needs to be a little bit more research done tonight and some technical memoranda developed to supplement that.

Kathy Oetinger, Commissioner

My question is maybe theoretical, but maybe not. This is a lot about greenhouse gasses and the environment as much as the numbers of cars on the street, and I understand putting things together so the cars don’t have to travel so far to get the thing accomplished, included the economy, but as cars become more environmentally clean through electricity how does that affect this? Does that get factored into we’re still trying to keep the cars from moving, because everything generates heat and congestion, so how does that balance out?

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

For now, and probably at least through the end of the decade if I were to speculate, the mode share that’s electric and hybrid vehicles is still dwarfed by gas guzzling SUVs and trucks in a lot of cases, and so for right now the law does not recommend divvying up by traction power, electric versus gas versus diesel. To the degree that the fleet mix does change, that would be captured in the greenhouse gas section of CEQA related to the pollutant emissions, versus for the transportation section we’re looking at the intersection of the land use pattern and the transportation system to align CEQA and to give an easier pass

for projects in CEQA that are located in areas where people are more likely to walk and bike, or the likelihood to drive is less because there are alternative options. Another way to think of it was it used to be really hard to put residential near BART stations because it would be very congested and under level of service you'd just have really bad CEQA impacts; now it's flipped around.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Commissioner Oetinger, I agree with you and assume this 15% OPR level does have some accounting for the transition to EVs at that kind of macro level, and I know our Climate Action Committee is trying to track the percentage or number of electric vehicles in the City and how that progresses over time. The DMV actually tracks that, so there are metrics there, but in the big picture being able to walk or bicycle versus a vehicle, even if it's an EV there are a lot of emissions related to either the production of energy and all of the consumables that come with that in terms of the mass production of that, and the energy and greenhouse gas that goes into that, so cars wear out. Bicycles wear out too, but there is probably not the same kind of environmental impact to produce a bicycle. Solar panels aren't all the great for the environment too, so it's a little bit the same in that. That's not really what's being accounted for in the VMT, but I think that's from that kind of macro level of how you're looking at it. I think I included the number of General Plan components that we have just in the transportation section, but there are a lot of other components of our General Plan that talk about walkable and bikeable communities and things like that, so it's all kind of the same thing going toward the same goal of a smaller town where you can walk or bike and having that as an option based on where we're doing future development.

Kathy Oetinger, Commissioner

Overall it's hard to see that this has any affect at all on what our little town does. I don't think it's ever going to stop or change anything; it seems like a lot of good effort toward a goal and I just don't think it will ever change anything overall.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

It's interesting to look at the idea of the bulls eye and putting things close in as a way to encourage more development in the places that are already walkable-oriented places, and I think we can still do that. I think that needs to be coupled with other policy changes; we can't just do that and expect people to start developing downtown. I think it's a way that helps them get through their CEQA documentation for a project like the Habitat for Humanity project or whatever kind of project might be proposed downtown, but there are still other policies we need to look at that would even further encourage that kind of development, like parking requirements and things like that. There are still a lot of things that we do beyond VMT that will help push that development and help reduce our overall impact.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Right, and our Climate Action Committee have been looking at some of those policies. For instance, they looked at the scooter share program but after vetting that with some of the suppliers of those they came to the conclusion that what we actually need more is a bicycle or e-bike share program, because we have enough topography and we have a good system of trails to get from one side of town to the other in some areas. So they are continuing to look at other programs like that that would also help, because it's great to have a bunch of bicycle lanes but if you are coming in from Santa Rosa on a bus but you have that last mile between the bus and where you need to get to for your job and there's no link, are you going to take the bus or are you going to drive because it's easier? And other policies certainly help along with obviously locating jobs close to where the bus routes come in.

Deborah Burnes, Commissioner

How do you take a hotel into account? Obviously the hotel that is going to be in downtown is going to have less VMT because they can walk to the restaurants or movie theater as opposed to the one that is outside of town, but how do you look at those tourists? Because they're going to go to the wineries, and they're going to go to Healdsburg to eat, and they might go to San Francisco.

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

It's wineries and hotels that are going to count first, and the answer is actually somewhat similar for both. Let's just say for these types of uses in general there is going to be an employment component of that use, and you look at that employee VMT using the employee VMT threshold. But then you would look at that visitor VMT, like you would at least here in Sonoma County thus far, as being looked at under that retail. How much driving occurs because of that, and for hotels do you have a hotel in an under-served area or an over-served area? The other important thing, and we didn't get too deep into this because it's beyond the scope of this presentation and it gets deep into the methodology, is there is an expectation that you track the full lengths of your trips. You can not just cut the trip lengths off at the County line, for example, and that's why big data and cell phone data for hotel projects, wineries, and tasting rooms are so important, because you need to capture all that VMT associated with the project, not just for transportation analysis but also to seed your air quality, greenhouse gas, and energy analysis, and those areas are subject to comment and review by the public as well.

Deborah Burnes, Commissioner

I guess we don't have many hotels yet, but if you look at visitors will that make your VMT go up in your city and does that get harder to control?

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

That's a very tough question. Visitor VMT is tied back to the land uses in a lot of cases. We're talking about the origin destination method. Trips that just pass through your city and don't stop anywhere are just ignored in the calculation because they're not interacting with any land uses there. So for a hotel project, yes, we would be looking at the VMT going to wineries or their trip to the hotel from SFO, so we do try to track all of that VMT because that's ultimately what CEQA requires for a defensible analysis.

Vice Chair Fritz asked for public comment.

Kyle Falbo

I'm really impressed to see improvements or transformation of the way that we're measuring vehicles. I love that there are mathematical models happening in the background behind all this, and I feel like it's an improvement. But I have to agree that at the end of the day, especially when it comes to housing, that automobile-centric housing is a self-fulfilling prophesy, and until we commit to looking at alternative housing models and solutions that aren't focused on a car, a garage, a driveway, a parking space, because that's the entire conversation about housing and has been for a very long time, we're going to be spinning in circles and giving lip service to a new metric that really won't create any sort of actual impact. I appreciate identifying that, but let's get to the work of actually modifying our objective standards in such a way that will actually reduce the amount of auto-centric housing that we have.

Vice Chair Fritz closed public comment.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

Do you want to then go through the slides that you want some discussion or feedback on?

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

One of the first major questions that come up is 15% versus another number. For context, a lot of agencies have adopted the 15% number. A handful have adopted 16.8% with the understanding that requiring 16.8% could increase the number of environmental impact reports that need to be prepared versus a 15%, and then beyond that just making it harder for projects to screen out. There are some cases in some smaller cities where 16.8% is such a large drop that no areas of the city can qualify for screening because it's such a big drop versus the grand average across the city.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I think part and parcel of that is for the home base whether you use the city level or the Bay Area region, because obviously those are going to be different as well.

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

There is one other consideration there, and that is the control over the metric number there, if it's the city average or the regional average. There are some agencies in the County that have adopted the county-wide average, but you could theoretically down the line—because it's a rolling baseline—run into a situation where those rows of the table flip where the county-wide average is actually higher than the city-wide average, and now your threshold isn't defensible, versus the OPR guidance. We haven't been able to talk about this yet, but we see an example in Southern California where that did occur in Orange County and it got a major EIR. It was going to be a mitigated negative declaration, but then it got kicked into an EIR because of a swap in how those numbers lined up.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Obviously these two numbers interact. It feels like just using the City VMT is the easier way to do that; then we're basically looking at if we have for home-based trips 17.1 vehicle miles per resident, that's something that we can actually grasp. If you take every resident of Sebastopol, they're driving 17.1 miles a day. Can we get that number down by 15-16%? That a little easier to grasp than doing Bay Area region where you think about all those other varying factors, so I would recommend using the city. I think it will be more of a challenge to the City to see how much below our own threshold can we get it and not be comparing ourselves to a region that has a lot of different transit and other dynamics, and then focus on 15-16%.

Kathy Oetinger, Commissioner

Is that number adjusted?

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

Yes, because it is a rolling baseline. What analysts typically do is look at—and I'm going to use this technical term—the basier of the model, which for Sonoma County is 2019, and the future year of the model, 2040, and interpolate to the year of that. The model is updated about every five years, so Sonoma County is going to be updating their model starting next year, so fiscal year 2024/2025, and so the model is fairly well maintained in terms of land use changes, transportation network changes, so you're really using each version of that model for only five years at a time before it gets an update. Next year will the model be a little bit long in the tooth? Potentially, but it's still, in my opinion, the best available tool that we have.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I think it will be helpful when they do that, because it will be long enough after COVID. When we did the model on 2019 everyone was like, "2019, wait a second. That's not right." Fehr & Peers actually did, and we as the planning directors worked to make sure we had metrics that were pre-COVID and made sense in terms of the different seasonality as well, knowing that we have both ag workers and tourist season, and then we have schools on the season, and so all that data was taken into account pre-COVID for the model, correct?

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

Correct.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

So it will be kind of the post-COVID, and I would imagine with the work from home and hybrid schedules that there will probably be some sort of shift at that point.

Kathy Oetinger, Commissioner

And everyone is getting older. We're an aging community still.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Sebastopol is, yes, and I'm not sure how that impacts travel.

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

I'm not going to comment on that, but what I would say is to the degree that there are those factors, when the models get updated we do incorporate big data, we do have to recalibrate the model back to new traffic counts, new travel patterns, and really make sure that the model is at least for the base year serving as a good replicator of the conditions out there within the bounds imposed on us by the State.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

I tend to agree with Kari on using the city-wide versus the regional numbers in terms of the 15% versus 16.8%. I don't know if I feel strongly about it. I'm kind of inclined to go with the 15% just to not make it too extra onerous.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I don't know what kind of questions we should be asking to see where we should be setting that number. Like how much does 1% impact? When you say 16.8% means that nothing could screen out, and in the screening as the lead agency for CEQA if there's a project that by the numbers looks like it should be screened out but staff knows of something that's really specific and odd about that, we can pull that. So screening means that they wouldn't have to go through that for CEQA, but if staff knows of something that's really weird that would most likely put it below that 15%, we can always pull it and request the VMT analysis anyway.

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

The other part of perspective here is in that VMT mitigation research. For a rural/suburban town like Sebastopol the theoretical maximum effectiveness if you did everything feasible on a site is reducing the VMT down by about 10%. So if you took the average residential unit in Sebastopol and put all of the feasible transportation demand measure on it, you'd still be above the threshold of significance. A lot agencies and decision-makers have asked about how 15% versus 16.8% doesn't seem like a lot in determining whether you have an impact that needs mitigation or no mitigation, but then can you even mitigate that for the average land use. So 15% versus 16.8%, in my opinion 15% would be fairly stringent given the mitigation potential.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

I just did a quick calculation, and it's very minor in terms of for the average household the 17.1 VMT, it's like 2.5. The 16.8% is 2.8, so it's not a huge difference in actual vehicle miles, but I hear what you're saying about the mitigation becomes and more challenging as you get to those levels.

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

And proving it for CEQA purposes and where does the evidence point you in terms of that?

Deborah Burnes, Commissioner

I agree with the 15% Vice Chair Fritz is suggesting. I think that makes the most sense as well.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Just to confirm, we do have for office uses, and this is just office, not industrial.

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

Usually for employment-focused uses, places where the vast majority of your SB 743 VMT is going to be commuters, because we're going to be excluding freight and economic activity from those calculations, yes, those would be carried under the office.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

A recent example that has come before the Commission, we've had cannabis manufacturing and they have also requested a delivery permit, so in the cannabis manufacturing, which they probably have two or three offices in the building as well as the manufacturing locations, that would be considered office, but the delivery part of it would not be?

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

It would not be part of that, and it actually may not even be subject to SB 743 at all.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Because it's transportation of the goods, just like when a winery is shipping their wine, that part of the industry is not...

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

Yes. The actual formal definition, without getting too far into it, is it's VMT generated by automobiles and light trucks, pickup trucks, delivery trucks, and those sorts of things are not subject to VMT in the transportation section. They would be subject to VMT in greenhouse gas, energy, and those other sections that consider the whole and complete VMT.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Then similar, like we just had Anytime Fitness, would that be considered retail?

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

That's a tough one.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Obviously the employees there would be part of the office.

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

The employees there, if I had to guess I'd probably consider that a retail, because most of your trips are going to be patrons.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

But they would be captured by a home base if someone were coming from their home to the gym and back.

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

Yes, so in that case it would be home based if we were analyzing a residential project, but for the purposes of the Anytime Fitness project, we would look at the gym itself as a net new VMT.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

So for the office we have the option of doing the region, which is higher. It's a little bit more latitude in terms of a potential revenue generation economic project for the city versus Sebastopol. We actually have a pretty low home-to-work VMT. Do you know why that is?

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

Yes, I think what we're finding in general is if you work in Sonoma County you usually live in Sonoma County, more so than for the Bay Area region writ large where you have people commuting from Concord to Silicon Valley. In that case, that commute trip would be 110, because it's 55 one way and 55 the other way. So that's why that number is so high versus employment uses here in Sonoma County that generally fair better, because work local/live local.

Kathy Oetinger, Commissioner

Do you even count the work from home? I guess you count every person who works.

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

That would be zero.

Kathy Oetinger, Commissioner

What about the people who don't work? Are you counting those as people too?

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

No. This is about commute trips. Our travel models can specifically isolate out the commuter trips, and so a lot of what we've had to do lately is changing around the numbers and assuming a work from home factor. I would not recommend we get deep into that for Sonoma County, but certain mega office projects, for the Googles and the Facebooks of the world down in Silicon Valley, have some complex CEQA things that they have to deal with down there. I can only presume that when the County updates their model some of these work from home variables are going to hop in there.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

But the reality is if you're working from home you're not producing any VMT, and you're also potentially not going to have an office project, because you're working from home, not an office.

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

Yes.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

But retirees do not contribute to home to work based trips, so our elderly population is not why we have a low commute VMT.

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

And that's why, if you look at the variable there, it is per employee and not per resident.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Ian, do you have a recommendation? It sounds like most people are just using the Bay Area region for the same reason Vice Chair Fritz recommended the 15%.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

Because it gives you a little more leeway if you use the Bay Area region.

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

Yes, it's consistent with the OPR analysis, and so most agencies are just going 15% below the region.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

That makes sense to me.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Then there's the question of 15% below the regional, or if you wanted I assume you could leave residential at 15% but change office if you wanted to.

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

Yes, you could. For full disclosure, most places are just choosing 15% both sides. I know that there are some agencies in Southern California where employment VMT dominates the residential VMT; I think City of Industry is one of those. I think even they've just kept it at 15%, so the 15% tends to be the magic number out of the State Office of Planning and Research.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

So it would be 15% below the 22.3%?

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

Yes.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

So it would actually allow the VMT to offices to be a little bit higher?

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

Yes.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

You had the comment about the retail.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

I would say the 50,000 square feet seems pretty high for Sebastopol. I don't imagine us ever getting a 50,000 square foot retail facility, so I don't have a sense of what that number should be. What's your experience with other smaller jurisdictions like ours, what they're going towards?

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

Healdsburg is thinking about 10,000 for general retail, and your typical convenience store is about 5,000-6,000 square feet in a lot of cases, so that's about the scale.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I think Exchange Bank was 5,500 square feet.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

I want to say the new SVS is 15,000 square feet, just to give a sense of what that is.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Most of the downtown stores are about 2,000 square feet, so 50,000 square feet is huge for Sebastopol. We do require a conditional use permit, and the square footage threshold for that is 30,000 square feet, which still seems very high to me.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

Safeway is probably 30,000 square feet. Lucky is probably that scale.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

To not analyze traffic on something like that from a VMT seems a little bit odd.

Kathy Oetinger, Commissioner

What was the old CVS?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

The CVS building is 26,000 square feet, which was still a very large building, and 30,000 square feet is the threshold for a conditional use permit. When I first got here I wondered why that number wasn't more like 15,000 square feet.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

How do you encourage a larger grocery store in the center of town that has maybe not as much parking as another grocery store, like a Whole Foods versus Lucky kind of thing? The Whole Foods has a small parking lot, is downtown, is more walkable; and Lucky is bigger, has a bigger parking lot, and is more a kind of drive to place. What's the level of the preference for something like the Whole Foods versus something like a Lucky? But you also at the same time want it be distributed so people can walk to places as well, so it's a little bit of a tricky thing of what you're trying to really incentivize.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

That's a whole discussion of dynamics. Safeway is where the Analy High School students go. If you've ever been around Safeway at 3:30 on a weekday during the school year you know what I'm talking about. Whole Foods, I see a lot of people grabbing lunches, so office workers and they're probably walking there; the same with Safeway. When I'm at Pacific Market over lunch hour I see folks who are coming in from wineries and stuff or from the ags and other businesses, and they're going there because then they don't have that extra mile to get to downtown. Yes, it definitely is an interesting dynamic, so conditional use permit at what level is definitely a good conversation to have and we'll add that to our Planning Commission work plan, since that's not necessarily tonight's discussion, but I guess the question is at what point would a conditional use permit be required? I'm hearing 50,000 square feet; let's bring that down. Staff can bring some options back to you at the next meeting if you want us to look at certain things and see if you have a sense of buildings or uses that you want us to look up, or get a sense of what we've been permitting

lately to get a feel for how busy that is at what square foot is probably a good way to get a handle on it in terms of what square footage versus traffic.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

I think it would be good to have a sense. It's hard at this point to know where to go with it. Some kind of tiered system makes sense, but I don't know exactly what the tiers are.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

So the larger scale, like a grocery store, being different from...

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

From the local serving retail. You mentioned the local serving versus a wider serving. Like there are stores that cater to just in-town residents and stores that cater more toward all of West County or whatever.

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

Just a reminder that these screening criteria could always be revised over time if they get set up. Kari also mentioned that if there is a particular project that fits under that cap but maybe it's not truly local serving, staff has the ability to pull that and to require analysis to prove it. From my perspective I've heard something less than 50,000 square feet, but then a little bit of homework.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I think Ian and John and Suzy and I will put our heads together and think about what might be a good recommendation. I can also reach out to Healdsburg and Cotati and see why they picked their metrics so we have someone who has thought about and set it at that different level.

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

And again, there is the ability to deny the use of screening for projects with certain elements. The typical one that gets brought up a lot is drive-throughs. I understand drive-throughs are not going to be happening in Sebastopol anytime soon, but that's an auto-oriented feature that encourages people to drive.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Like a carwash.

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

Yes, a carwash particularly. You may have heard some things that are very much tourist focused. It may be small, but it's tourist-focused, they don't get to just automatically pass out of VMT, so they're having some discussions at some of the more rural agencies, not Santa Rosas, not Rohnert Parks, not Cotatis, about that particular item there as well.

Deborah Burnes, Commissioner

Back to tourism and hotels. All of these small towns like Healdsburg and Windsor do these events where people come from all over, so Peacetown would one that we do here. How do you look at the VMT for something like that?

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

Usually the way I go about it is because of the big data we're able to plop a zone in the system and we can look back at previous events and say what does the VMT and trip pattern look like? If that event were to move to another space, what is the VMT effect of that move? Another way is if you had a certain type of special event and then another

person wanted to have the same type of special event ten miles away, you can kind of get the catchment area for this original special event space and then apply that same catchment area to this new space and then change around the trip (inaudible) associated with that. Big data has been a revolution there and that's definitely a case where we'd want to not use the travel model and really let the actual trip patterns dictate how that VMT gets calculated.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

A lot of our special events like the Apple Blossom Parade, July 3rd and those types of things are temporary events that are exempt from this kind of analysis. CEQA is for built projects. There is a specific exemption for temporary events like that.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

You brought up the mitigation measures and what kind of projects will we have in Sebastopol, and I think there could be some things that we certainly could do to either our own pool or impact fee kind of thing where we pool our own resources to do more bike lane projects or the bike share programs or whatever it is.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

There is a Sebastopol shuttle that Sonoma County Transit does and the City supports, and I know there was a discussion at the budget meeting this year about can we afford to continue to do this? Is that something that a mitigation fee could do, and have you ever seen a local community that isn't a half a million people or larger do their own impact fees for that?

Ian Barnes, Fehr & Peers

The short answer is yes; we have seen that. I think Walnut Creek is a really good example where they run the downtown trolley from their BART station, and there are other ones that run from the Pleasant Hill BART, which is actually in Walnut Creek, to other parts along the Treat Boulevard corridor and using development impact fees and other programs to fund those, so that's a very popular program. There are a handful of other agencies in the Bay Area that have that downtown trolley. And then, yes, supplementing these regional connections to, say, a SMART station is definitely going to be a backbone of the bank and exchange programs. For example, Western Riverside County getting people to the Metrolink 91 lines in San Bernardino. You would maybe see something similar for Sebastopol to get to downtown Santa Rosa or Cotati's SMART, something like that.

8. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Design Review Subcommittee, Director Svanstrom

The Design Review Subcommittee met on July 25th to discuss the objective design standards, and continued the discussion to the next meeting.

9. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Svanstrom provided updates.

The Commission asked questions of Director Svanstrom.

10. ADJOURNMENT: Vice Chair Fritz adjourned the meeting at 7:58 p.m. The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting will take place on Tuesday, August 15, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

3. CIRCULATION

Introduction

The Circulation Element provides the framework for decisions concerning the city's multi-modal transportation system, which includes roadway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian modes of travel. The Circulation Element provides for coordination with the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA), which serves as the coordinating agency for transportation funding for Sonoma County.

State law (California Government Code Section 65302(b)) mandates that the Circulation Element contain the general location and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, terminals, military airports and ports, and other public utilities and facilities, to the extent these items exist in the planning area. As required by California Government Code Section 65302(b), the Circulation Element is correlated closely with the Land Use Element and is related to the Housing, Conservation & Open Space, Noise, and Safety elements.



The Circulation Element reflects the City's desire to provide for complete street, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. This element considers overall mobility, existing and desired land uses, future street conditions, and mobility for non-automobile users, including safe routes to schools. This element establishes standards that guide development of the transportation system through goals, policies, and actions.

Background information regarding circulation conditions in Sebastopol is presented in Chapter 2 of the General Plan Update Existing Conditions Report.

3. CIRCULATION

Goals, Policies, and Actions

Goal CIR 1: Provide a Transportation System that Promotes the Use of Alternatives to the Single-Occupant Vehicle and Facilitates the Efficient and Environmentally Responsible Movement of People and Goods Within and Through the City of Sebastopol

Policy CIR 1-1: Ensure that the City's circulation network is maintained and improved over time to support buildout of the General Plan in a manner that is consistent with the General Plan Circulation Map. (Figure 3.1)

Policy CIR 1-2: Ensure that the City's circulation network is a well-connected system of streets, roads, sidewalks, multi-use trails, routes, and paths that effectively accommodates vehicular and non-vehicular traffic in a manner that considers the context of surrounding land uses and the needs of all roadway users.

Policy CIR 1-3: Regard the quality of life in Sebastopol, maintaining its special small-town character, and providing a safety network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities as more important than accommodating vehicle circulation.

Policy CIR 1-4: Promote public education and participation in transportation issues and decision-making.

Policy CIR 1-5: When analyzing impacts to the circulation network created by new development or roadway improvements, consider the needs of all users, including those with disabilities, ensuring that pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders are considered preeminent to automobile drivers.

Policy CIR 1-6: In evaluating circulation improvement needs, and in reviewing major development proposals, consider impacts for all modes of transportation, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, and vehicles.

Policy CIR 1-7: Projects that would substantially impact circulation conditions shall provide a circulation impact report. This report will serve as a decision-making tool for the City, recognizing that maintaining and improving the community's social fabric and economic vitality includes consideration of a project's effects on pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit as well as the overall effect of improvements associated with achieving appropriate Level of Service. LOS is not intended to be used as the primary method to limit the size or density of a project, but rather to provide decision-makers with a picture of the impacts associated with a project and allow decision-makers to determine appropriate improvements to alleviate traffic impacts, to the extent appropriate and feasible. The Planning Department will determine whether a circulation impact report is required as part of the initial project application review process.

Circulation impact reports shall evaluate:

- Project effects on all modes of travel, including pedestrians, bicycles, transit, and vehicles;
- Improvements to accommodate the project with a focus on access and safety; and

- Impacts to vehicle travel, as determined by the Transportation Research Board’s Highway Capacity Manual. This analysis is intended to provide a menu of potential improvements but should not mitigate LOS by reducing project size, either by intensity or density.

Decision-makers shall evaluate projects based on the merits of a project, including contribution to City character, and shall determine whether the City is best served by either implementing improvements to address potential circulation impacts or, if improvements are determined to not be appropriate or feasible, ensuring that a project provides a certain level of density and intensity, as envisioned by Figure 2-2 (Land Use Map) to contribute to the social fabric of the community and meet the City’s goals for economic development, economic vitality, and adequate housing.

Multimodal improvements, traffic calming improvements, or other system-wide transportation network improvements may be required in lieu of requiring mitigations to the impacted road or intersection in order to reduce the overall impacts to mobility. This approach could apply to the use of traffic impact fees collected from developments as well.

Policy CIR 1-8: Establish multi-modal LOS objectives that would facilitate review of transit, bicycle and pedestrian impacts, in addition to motor vehicles when these methods are more available and useful.

Policy CIR 1-9: Through the development review process, CEQA process, and through long-range infrastructure planning efforts, identify circulation network improvements and mitigation measures necessary to maintain the City’s vehicle, transit, bicycle and pedestrian objectives.

Policy CIR 1-10: Consider all transportation improvements as opportunities to improve safety, access, and mobility for all roadway users and avoid dead-end streets and cul-de-sacs.

Policy CIR 1-11: Provide high quality regular maintenance for existing and future transportation facilities including streets, sidewalks, and paths.

Policy CIR 1-12: Maximize the use of matching funding grant sources to provide ongoing maintenance, operation, and management of the City’s circulation network.

Shared Space is an urban design approach which seeks to minimize the segregation of pedestrians and vehicles. This is done by removing features such as curbs, road surface markings, traffic signs, and traffic lights. The goal of shared space design is to improve traffic efficiency and safety when the street and surrounding public space is redesigned to encourage each person to negotiate their movement directly with others.

Shared space design can take many different forms depending on the level of demarcation and segregation between different transportation modes. It has been suggested that, by creating a greater sense of uncertainty and making it unclear who has priority, drivers will reduce their speed. This is conducive to a safer

3. CIRCULATION

Policy CIR 1-13: Consider roundabouts in lieu of traffic signals where adequate right of way is available and appropriate conditions exist to maximize intersection efficiency, maintain continuous but moderate traffic flow, reduce pollution emissions, reduce accident severity, and enhance pedestrian and cyclist circulation.

Policy CIR 1-14: Maintain and improve critical transportation facilities to provide logical emergency vehicle access and emergency evacuation needs.

Policy CIR 1-15: Continue to evaluate the benefits and feasibility of a two-way street system on some or all of SR 116 between McKinley Street and just south of Palm Avenue. The two-way street system should focus on slower vehicle speeds and enhancements to pedestrian and bicycle travel.

Policy CIR 1-16: Identify potential for bypass route(s) or “beltway connector” route(s) which minimize impacts to the Laguna, and provide regional travel options with the intention of providing traffic with an optional route away from downtown Sebastopol.

Policy CIR 1-17: Consider a “shared space” design where pedestrian activity is welcomed.

Policy CIR 1-18: Consider the impacts of traffic and land use growth on the road network, especially in downtown Sebastopol, when evaluating proposals for new development.

Policy CIR 1-19: Consider the impacts of traffic and land use growth in surrounding jurisdictions when designing Sebastopol’s circulation network, and in particular, the impacts created on the SR 116 and SR 12-Bodega Avenue corridors by growth in surrounding Sonoma County.

Policy CIR 1-20: Discourage through traffic located on State Highways and Bodega Avenue from using residential streets as bypass routes.

Policy CIR 1-21: Monitor the development and implementation of self-driving, autonomous vehicle technologies and consider appropriate methods to accommodate and adapt to these technology changes.

Actions in Support of Goal CIR 1

Action CIR 1a: The City shall cooperate with other jurisdictions in Sonoma County to reduce transportation congestion through the following actions:

- *Staff should participate in the SCTA's technical advisory groups in pursuing funding opportunities.*
- *Encourage public input into SCTA's congestion management planning process*
- *Participate in future updates to the Comprehensive Transportation Plan*
- *Coordinate with the County of Sonoma including the Parks & Recreation Department in efforts to expand regional bicycle and pedestrian networks to meet anticipated demands*

Action CIR 1b: Coordinate with the County of Sonoma, Caltrans, and the City of Santa Rosa to investigate, and as appropriate, determine feasible alternative routes, bypasses or “beltway connector” routes, including both north-south and east-west routes, (e.g. Llano Road extension from SR 12 to Occidental Road, or measures to divert some Hwy. 116 traffic at the southern terminus of Llano Road, or diversion of some Hwy. 12 traffic to Occidental Road at Fulton Road, or improving Ragle Road) and

evaluate benefits provided by these routes. If appropriate, work collaboratively with the County of Sonoma and Caltrans to determine the extent of roadway improvements needed to support these bypass routes, add the project to the City's Capital Improvement Plans (CIP) and/or seek County or other agencies plan improvements, encourage proactive participation and coordination by the SCTA and support funding through the SCTA or other sources, and as appropriate, update both City and County General Plan Circulation Elements to include these routes.

Action CIR 1c: In collaboration with Caltrans, complete a comprehensive 2-way street analysis for SR 116 (South Main Street, Petaluma Avenue and McKinley Street) including traffic operational analysis, concept designs, urban design/landscaping improvements, economic benefits and identification of potential funding sources. As appropriate, work with SCTA, Caltrans, and other affected agencies to update policy objectives based on the results of the analysis. As interim roadway improvements to the SR 116 corridor are proposed, they shall be evaluated by City staff for compatibility with a future conversion to 2-way streets, in order to foster informed decision making.

Action CIR 1d: Consider the following roadway improvements and projects included in the CIP to maintain the safety and efficiency of the current circulation system, and to support buildout of the General Plan.

- *Healdsburg Avenue (SR 116)/Covert Lane intersection - install a traffic signal or roundabout*
- *Healdsburg Avenue (SR 116)/Murphy Avenue intersection - install a traffic signal or roundabout*
- *Gravenstein Highway South (SR 116)/Fircrest Avenue intersection - install a traffic signal or roundabout*
- *McKinley Street/Laguna Park Way/Petaluma Avenue intersection - install a beacon or appropriate pedestrian crossing improvements on the southern leg pedestrian crossing*
- *Willow Street - extend the street through the City parking lot from Main Street to Petaluma Avenue to enhance grid connectivity*
- *Abbott Avenue - change route to parallel Sebastopol Avenue, with a potential connection to Morris Street*

Action CIR 1e: The Public Works Department shall maintain a systematic pavement management program and identify and prioritize maintenance projects in the CIP.

- *Street maintenance should include upkeep and regular cleaning of bicycle routes to remove debris and repair poor pavement conditions that discourage bicycle riding.*
- *The pavement management program data system should address signage and pavement quality throughout the city.*

Action CIR 1f: As part of the development review process, the Planning Department, Public Works Department, Police Department, and Fire Department shall review development projects to ensure that developers:

- *Construct transportation improvements along property frontages when appropriate*
- *Address the project's proportional-share of impacts to the City's circulation network through payment of traffic mitigation fees*

3. CIRCULATION

- *Provide for complete streets to the extent feasible; facilitating walking, biking, and transit modes*
- *Provide appropriate on-site pedestrian and bicycle features*
- *Fund traffic impact studies that identify on-site and off-site project effects and mitigation measures*
- *Provide adequate emergency vehicle access*
- *Minimize driveway cuts consistent with access and site planning considerations*

Action CIR 1g: *Update the City's Traffic Impact Fee (TIF) schedule to include, as appropriate, the roadway improvements necessary to support buildout of the General Plan.*

Action CIR 1h: *Use the City's CIP to identify and address deficient areas, such as areas where additional striping, sidewalks, maintenance, and other improvements are needed.*

Action CIR 1i: *Routinely monitor the performance of the circulation network, optimizing traffic signals and utilizing Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) measures where beneficial to maximize efficiency of the existing network on a regular basis.*

Action CIR 1j: *Provide staff support/liaison to regional agencies such as SCTA and Caltrans in the implementation of ITS measures that improve the efficiency of roadway and transit networks in western Sonoma County.*

Action CIR 1k: *Ensure regular monitoring of traffic accidents, traffic levels of service, and intersection capacity to update base data and respond to safety problems and changing conditions. Prioritize locations with high collision rates for safety improvements.*

Action CIR 1l: *Continually seek opportunities to fund maintenance of and improvements to the circulation network, including through active pursuit of a wide range of grant sources.*

Action CIR 1m: *Establish specific Transportation Demand Management (TDM) requirements for new development projects and consider making requirements sector-based (e.g., residential, commercial, industrial).*

Action CIR 1n: *Create incentives for proposed development to incorporate measures to reduce vehicle trips, such as mixed use projects and including bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the development plans and connections to existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities.*

Action CIR 1o: *Ensure that future development provides roadway improvements and/or fees contributing towards transportation improvements consistent with the Circulation Diagram and Circulation Element system-wide mobility goals and improvements identified as part of the City's Traffic Impact Fee (TIF) to improve the safety, efficiency and connectivity of the current circulation system for all modes of transportation, and to support buildout of the General Plan.*

Action CIR 1p: *Require future development to complete a fair share calculation and to pay their contribution upon the development of the project.*

Action CIR 1q: *Provide outreach and opportunities for public engagement with transportation planning issues and project initiatives, including use of citizen bodies such as the Planning Commission.*

Action CIR 1r: Coordinate with Caltrans to implement traffic calming, vehicle safety, and bicycle/pedestrian network improvements throughout Sebastopol. Also encourage Caltrans to maintain good pavement conditions on State Highways within Sebastopol, in order to reduce traffic-related roadway noise.

Action CIR 1s: Coordinate with Caltrans, SCTA, Sonoma County, school districts, and other appropriate entities to coordinate and optimize the use of circulation and mobility resources.

Insert Figure 3.1: Circulation Map

Insert Figure 3.2: Bike/Ped Map (from SCTA)

3. CIRCULATION

Goal CIR 2: Maintain and Expand a Safe and Efficient Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Transit Network that Connects Neighborhoods with Key Destinations to Encourage Travel by Non-Automobile Modes while also Improving Public Health

Policy CIR 2-1: Establish and maintain a system of interconnected bicycle and pedestrian facilities that facilitate commuter and recreational travel, and that are consistent with the City's parks, trails, and recreation goals and policies in this General Plan and the *Sebastopol Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (Amended November 2011)* or future updates of the plan.

Policy CIR 2-2: Routinely incorporate sidewalks and enhanced pedestrian crossing facilities as part of new street construction or enhancements to existing streets.

Policy CIR 2-3: Incorporate bicycle facilities according to the *Sebastopol Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan* (including bicycle lanes, pavement markings, pavement treatments, bicycle route and destination signs, and bicycle detection at traffic signals).

Policy CIR 2-4: Require development projects to construct frontage sidewalks, missing sidewalk sections, paths, and nearby enhanced crosswalks in a manner that is consistent with the City's goals and policies in this General Plan and the *Sebastopol Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*, and as dictated by the location of other activity centers, transit stops and common pedestrian destinations.

Policy CIR 2-5: Evaluate opportunities for pedestrian or other circulation and mobility connections to the circulation network in review of major development projects, and require appropriate improvements.

Policy CIR 2-6: Explore opportunities to better connect existing development to the bicycle/pedestrian network.

Policy CIR 2-7: Create an accessible circulation network that is consistent with guidelines established by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), allowing mobility-impaired users such as the disabled and elderly to safely and effectively travel within and beyond the city.

Policy CIR 2-8: Increase connectivity between trip attractors and trip generators, including a complete sidewalk network, marked and enhanced crossings, and well-lit paths.

Policy CIR 2-9: When it can be shown that construction of a sidewalk would be at odds with an existing neighborhood's aesthetic and the historic nature of the area, alternatives such as an off-street path or wider paved shoulders may be considered, particularly on low-volume local streets.

Policy CIR 2-10: Increase the safety of popular bicycle and pedestrian routes to schools, downtown, and other destinations in the City that don't involve riding on SR 116, SR 12 and/or Bodega Avenue including enhanced crossings of SR 116, SR 12 and/or Bodega Avenue.

Policy CIR 2-11: Work with utility providers to reduce or eliminate barriers to pedestrian and bicyclist mobility created by utility infrastructure (such as utility poles that obstruct accessibility).

Policy CIR 2-12: Establish and maintain bicycle facilities that are consistent with the network depicted in the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

Policy CIR 2-13: Public road construction projects shall incorporate facilities identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan to the greatest extent feasible.

Policy CIR 2-14: Provide secure bicycle racks in places such as the Downtown, at commercial areas, park and ride transit facilities, schools, multiple unit residential developments, and other locations where there is a concentration of residents, visitors, students, or employees.

Policy CIR 2-15: Ensure that all crossings where trails and roads meet include best practices for crossing design for these conflict points.

Policy CIR 2-16: Promote public education to help create an atmosphere of respect for bicycles and pedestrians.

Policy CIR 2-17: Through a CIP and joint funding from Sonoma County Transit, the City shall maintain and, where feasible, continue to build lighted and sheltered seating facilities at bus stops where appropriate.

Policy CIR 2-18: Pursue improvements and funding to increase transit ridership, increase transit frequencies on key corridors, increase the hours of transit operation, and expand regular transit service in portions of Sebastopol that currently have no public transit.

Policy CIR 2-19: Continue to work with Sonoma County Transit to create an effective Rider Awareness Program that will educate the public on the existing transit systems.

Policy CIR 2-20: Ensure that adequate lighting and trash disposal is provided at all bus stops.

Policy CIR 2-21: Work with Sonoma County Transit to identify the need for and locations of additional park-and-ride lots in Sebastopol in order to increase the number and length of trips made by transit and carpooling.

Policy CIR 2-22: Ensure that effective linkages are in place between the SMART commuter rail stations in Santa Rosa and Cotati and the city's primary activity centers.

Policy CIR 2-23: Encourage the use of park-and-ride lots and other transit incentives for Sebastopol commuters.

Policy CIR 2-24: Provide safe and continuous pedestrian, vehicular, and bicycle access at all transit park-and-ride facilities.

Policy CIR 2-25: Prioritize bicycle and pedestrian safety for students traveling to and from school.

Policy CIR 2-26: Support regional efforts to develop Safe Routes to School Programs for schools that serve Sebastopol's population.

Policy CIR 2-27: Prioritize the improvement of roadway pedestrian crossings throughout the community, particularly in accident-prone areas.

Policy CIR 2-28: Pursue improvements and funding for priority projects identified in the Sebastopol Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

3. CIRCULATION

Policy CIR 2-29: Encourage special events, such as festivals, community activities, etc. to provide onsite bicycle parking accommodations in order to promote and facilitate bicycle use for transportation to such events. Consider incentives to event organizers that incorporate onsite bicycle accommodations.

Actions in Support of Goal CIR 2

Action CIR 2a: *As part of the development process, review development applications to ensure compliance with the Sebastopol Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.*

Action CIR 2b: *Review traffic signal timing plans or work with Caltrans to ensure adequate crossing times for all users at signalized intersections.*

Action CIR 2c: *Ensure that bicycle loop detectors are present at traffic signals, clearly identified with stencils, and tested and maintained regularly.*

Action CIR 2d: *Review all transportation improvements to ensure installation in accordance with current accessibility standards.*

Action CIR 2e: *Regularly review transportation corridors to identify barriers encountered by persons with disabilities, including locations where there are not ADA-compliant curb cuts and ramps, and address such obstacles in the CIP, to the extent that funding for such activities is available.*

Action CIR 2f: *Continue to include construction of bicycle and pathway facilities, including pedestrian road crossings and pedestrian pathways, in the City's CIP, prioritizing areas where gaps in the current network need to be filled.*

Action CIR 2g: *Focus on the identification of more Class I multi-user trails and Class IV separated bike facilities. In particular, pursue Class I or Class IV alternatives to SR 116, SR 12 and Bodega Avenue, Class II Bike lanes, and sharrow markings to create viable north-south and east-west mobility opportunities for bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages, as identified in the Sebastopol Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.*

Action CIR 2h: *As funding becomes available, the City shall encourage Sonoma County Transit to provide faster and more efficient routes, more frequent headways, extend service hours, and serve a greater portion of the City. The City would review and renew the contract as necessary and, when feasible, include provisions for:*

- *Consideration of an additional route.*
- *Bus headways of 15 minutes or less on routes serving Sebastopol.*
- *Local bus service operating until 10 PM.*
- *Saturday and Sunday bus services with expanded weekend hours.*

Action CIR 2i: *Compile a list of bus stops with inadequate lighting, and through the CIP, install street lights at those stops as funding is available.*

Action CIR 2j: *Study the feasibility of establishing a public or private shuttle system to serve the SMART commuter rail station.*

Action CIR 2k: *Review all transportation improvements to ensure installation in accordance with current accessibility standards.*

Action CIR 2l: Identify potential bicycle and pedestrian connections between residential areas and school campuses and incorporate into the Sebastopol Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

Action CIR 2m: As part of the development review process, ensure that new development projects provide bicycle and pedestrian improvements to facilitate the implementation of a Safe Routes to School plan for Sebastopol schools.

Action CIR 2n: Coordinate with the SCTA, Sonoma County Health Services, Sebastopol Union School District, and Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition to continue the Safe Routes to School Program in Sebastopol.

Action CIR 2o: Routinely review and update the Safe Routes to School plan, to reflect the current circulation infrastructure, student travel patterns, identified hazards, and school.

Action CIR 2p: Support and implement policies and recommendations related to transportation from Health Action's Action Plan Sonoma. These include:

- Increase in percent of commuters who use active transportation (walk, bike, or public transit).
- Implement and strengthen policies and programs to enhance transportation safety.

Action CIR 2q: Monitor national efforts to establish effective multimodal LOS standards for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit modes.

Action CIR 2r: Issue guidelines and incorporate assessment of multimodal LOS as a routine component of transportation impact analyses once the Planning Department determines a multimodal LOS methodology that is deemed suitable for application in Sebastopol.

Action CIR 2s: Periodically review priorities in the Sebastopol Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and update as necessary, incorporating current best practices.

Action CIR 2t: Coordinate with SCTA to include City staff and a citizen representative on the Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to ensure City representation in reviewing projects and funding sources.

Goal CIR 3: Coordinate Circulation Facilities with Land Use and Development Patterns to Create an Environment that Encourages Walking, Bicycling, and Transit Use

Policy CIR 3-1: Recognize the role of streets not only as vehicle routes but also as parts of a system of public spaces, with quality landscaping, street trees, and bicycle and pedestrian paths.

Policy CIR 3-2: Prioritize the quality of life for Sebastopol residents and visitors over vehicular traffic movement.

Policy CIR 3-3: Prioritize high-density and mixed land use patterns that promote transit and pedestrian travel along transit corridors.

Policy CIR 3-4: Design developments to include features that encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use. Design features shall include bus turnouts, transit shelters and benches, and pedestrian access points between subdivisions and between adjacent related land uses.

3. CIRCULATION

Policy CIR 3-5: Provide an interconnected street network that provides multiple points of access, discouraging cut-through traffic while maintaining neighborhood connectivity.

Policy CIR 3-6: Encourage local access connections between neighborhood parks and commercial areas by walking and biking as an alternative to short-distance driving.

Policy CIR 3-7: Ensure that the City's adopted street standards reflect a multi-modal focus, including vehicular lane widths that are no wider than necessary to serve the surrounding land use context and accommodate emergency vehicles.

Policy CIR 3-8: Where necessary, emphasize traffic management and calming techniques to control vehicle speeds on all streets within the City of Sebastopol.

Policy CIR 3-9: Design intersections to provide adequate and safe access for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists of all ages and abilities.

Policy CIR 3-10: Require new development to include effective linkages to the surrounding circulation system for all modes of travel, to the extent feasible.

Policy CIR 3-11: Review Subdivision Ordinance standards for new streets and driveways to maintain safe access while minimizing area devoted to vehicle traffic.

Policy CIR 3-12: Maintain restrictions on commercial truck routes to protect residential neighborhoods.

Policy CIR 3-13: Use urban design techniques, such as minimizing curb cuts and driveways, to improve the pedestrian and bicycle environment.

Actions in Support of Goal CIR 3

Action CIR 3a: During the development review process, the Planning Department shall review plans to ensure that projects include an interconnected network of streets and paths that facilitate non-auto modes for shorter trips, and disperse rather than concentrate traffic in residential neighborhoods.

Action CIR 3b: The Public Works Department shall review plans for new or modified intersections to ensure that the number of vehicle lanes is limited where possible to provide for moderate speeds and pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and that curb extensions are installed where appropriate to reduce driving speeds and shorten pedestrian crossing distances.

Action CIR 3c: The Public Works Department shall review its adopted street standards, including those specified in the Subdivision Ordinance, and update as necessary to achieve balanced roadway configurations that serve all users, and through design help to reinforce appropriate vehicle speeds for the surrounding land use context.

Action CIR 3d: The City shall develop a new truck route plan and associated signage that is consistent with the policies outlined in this Circulation Element.

Action CIR 3e: The City shall develop and implement a way-finding signage program that differentiates Downtown route options and rural route options that bypass the Downtown area. The intent of this program is to assist travelers in the identification of route options that may help alleviate Downtown traffic congestion.

3. CIRCULATION

Goal CIR 4: Ensure that a Combination of Managed Growth and Adequate Funding Mechanisms are in Place to Complete Future Improvements on the Local and Regional Circulation Networks

Policy CIR 4-1: Ensure that the rate of land use and population growth in Sebastopol is consistent with the ability to provide adequate transportation services.

Policy CIR 4-2: Require new development to contribute its proportional cost of circulation improvements necessary to address cumulative transportation impacts on roadways throughout the city, as well as the bicycle and pedestrian network.

Policy CIR 4-3: Include capital projects sponsored by the City and necessary to maintain and improve traffic operations in the five-year CIP that is annually reviewed by the City Council. Funding sources for such projects as well as intended project phasing will be generally identified in the CIP.

Policy CIR 4-4: Consider funding transportation projects intended to meet or maintain LOS standards and to provide mitigation for intersections through use of funds allocated by the SCTA.

Actions in Support of Goal CIR 4

***Action CIR 4a:** Maintain and routinely update the City's Development Impact Fee Program to cover the cost of mitigating development's share of improvements on non-regional and regional routes, as well as the cost of maintaining Sebastopol's identified service and/or performance standards.*

***Action CIR 4b:** As part of the development review process, require new development to mitigate circulation impacts by making improvements to the motorized and non-motorized circulation networks as necessary, and in a fair manner with an established nexus between the level of impact and required improvements and/or contributions.*

Goal CIR 5: Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) in Order to Reduce Congestion and Help Achieve Regional Efforts to Reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions

Policy CIR 5-1: Actively support the Regional Climate Protection Authority (RCPA) in its efforts to reduce GHG emissions and strive to meet its regional goals.

Policy CIR 5-2: Ensure that the City's Trip Reduction Program (Municipal Code Section 8.16) is implemented. The purpose of the City's Trip Reduction ordinance is to reduce traffic and improve air quality within the City of Sebastopol by promoting the development of Trip Reduction Programs (also referred to as Transportation Demand Management Programs, or TDM) at existing and future work sites. Examples of TDM programs may include (but are not limited to) subsidized transit passes, guaranteed ride home, carpool matching, telecommuting, alternative work schedules, car sharing, employer-sponsored vanpools, priced workplace parking, preferential parking for carpools and/or low-emission vehicles, and shower facilities at workplaces to support bike riding.

Policy CIR 5-3: Support the establishment and expansion of a regional network of electric vehicle charging stations and encourage the expanded use of electric vehicles.

Actions in Support of Goal CIR 5

Action CIR 5a: *Supply transportation data to the RCPA as requested to assist in the assessment of GHG reduction efforts.*

Action CIR 5b: *Establish specific TDM requirements that is consistent with the City's Trip Reduction Program for projects and consider making requirements sector-based (e.g., residential, commercial, industrial).*

Action CIR 5c: *Complete surveys of employment trips as outlined in the City's Trip Reduction Program.*

Action CIR 5d: *Establish standards and requirements for electric vehicle parking, including the installation of electric vehicle charging stations, in new development projects.*

Goal CIR 6: Maintain Parking Requirements and Practices that Complement the Desired Land Use Pattern while Minimizing Neighborhood Impacts

Policy CIR 6-1: Maximize the use of existing downtown parking areas, emphasizing the use of shared parking wherever possible, including provision of multi-purpose parking facilities that serve both residential and commercial uses.

Policy CIR 6-2: Investigate formation of a downtown parking assessment district which assembles and maintains common parking facilities within a defined downtown area.

Policy CIR 6-3: Periodically review the City's parking requirements to ensure that they result in an efficient supply that is not "over parked."

Policy CIR 6-4: Ensure that the parking demand associated with future development does not adversely impact adjacent residential areas due to spillover parking demand.

Policy CIR 6-5: Look for ways to generate revenue from areas of high-demand parking to put towards bicycle facilities and public spaces.

Policy CIR 6-6: Create reduced parking requirements for proposed downtown developments.

Policy CIR 6-7: Require parking facilities to provide for pedestrian access and safety, including delineated paths and walkways.

Actions in Support of Goal CIR 6

Action CIR 6a: *Work with downtown property owners, businesses and downtown organizations to facilitate the creation of a parking assessment district.*

Action CIR 6b: *Review parking best practices employed in other jurisdictions, as well as parking utilization within Sebastopol itself, and as appropriate, incorporate revised parking requirements into the Municipal Code.*

Action CIR 6c: *Study the potential for a parking permit system and reduced parking requirements to be implemented in transit-oriented areas such as Downtown Sebastopol.*

3. CIRCULATION

Action CIR 6d: Consider developing protocols for parking study requirements for major commercial, multi-family residential, mixed-use, and other projects that seek relief from the City's adopted parking requirements in order to ensure that adequate parking is provided.

Action CIR 6e: If deemed necessary by the City, use parking management techniques (such as residential parking permits) to limit spillover parking impacts in residential neighborhoods.

Action CIR 6f: Explore mechanisms, such as establishment of a parking district, funding parking facilities (structure(s) or lots) through payment of in-lieu or development impact fees, and expanding the City's shared parking provisions, to allow proposed development downtown to not have to provide on-site parking.

Action CIR 6g: Consider exemptions or reductions in parking requirements for small additions, changes in use, and developments on small sites in the downtown area.

Action CIR 6h: Emphasize the use of central shared parking and co-location of parking around the periphery of the downtown, without compromising requirements for new projects to contribute their fair-share towards parking facilities and infrastructure.