



CITY OF SALINAS
TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

DATE: MARCH 11, 2021
DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
FROM: JAMES SERRANO, TRANSPORTATION MANAGER
TITLE: Salinas VMT Policy: 11 Hill Circle Residential Development

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

No approval action is required. This Report is presented as information only on a residential development project, demonstrating the effect of the City's VMT policy on the treatment of traffic impacts that help encourage approval of housing projects.

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive a report on a residential development project and the treatment of traffic impacts under the City VMT policy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

At its August 2020 meeting, the Commission received a presentation on the City's DRAFT Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Policy (See Attachment 1) proposed for the consideration of development impacts under Senate Bill 743 (SB 743). The Policy was adopted by Council on October 13, 2020. This report provides an example of the new Policy's application to a residential development at 11 Hill Circle.

BACKGROUND:

In 2007, the Traffic and Traffic Commission considered the traffic impacts of a 54 unit-senior housing development at 11 Hill Circle. Subsequently, the Council considered and approved the development. Although the approval remained in full force only a portion of the site improvements were constructed. The project returns seeking approval for a new Planned Unit Development permit with revisions to the original development concept.

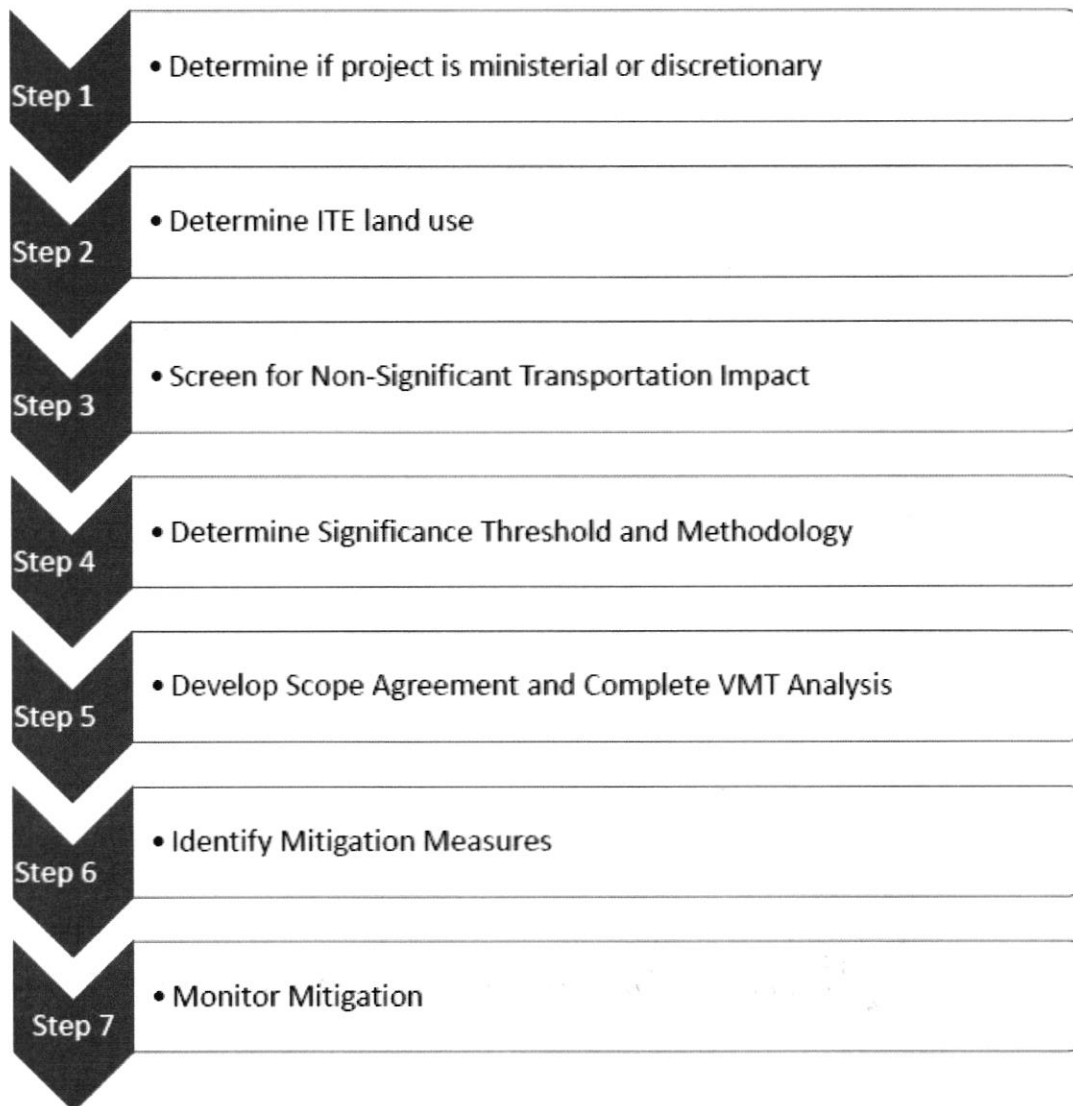
The proposed project is located on a 7.74-acre site at 11 Hill Circle and entails development of a 37-unit small lot detached single-family residential subdivision with one common lot, 18,500 square-feet of usable open space, 38 off-street parking spaces, and three affordable units for families earning less than the median income for Monterey County (See Attachment 2).

Typically, the evaluation of the development requires a traffic study that determines the additional trips generated by the conversion from the 54 units of senior housing (lesser trips) to the 37 single

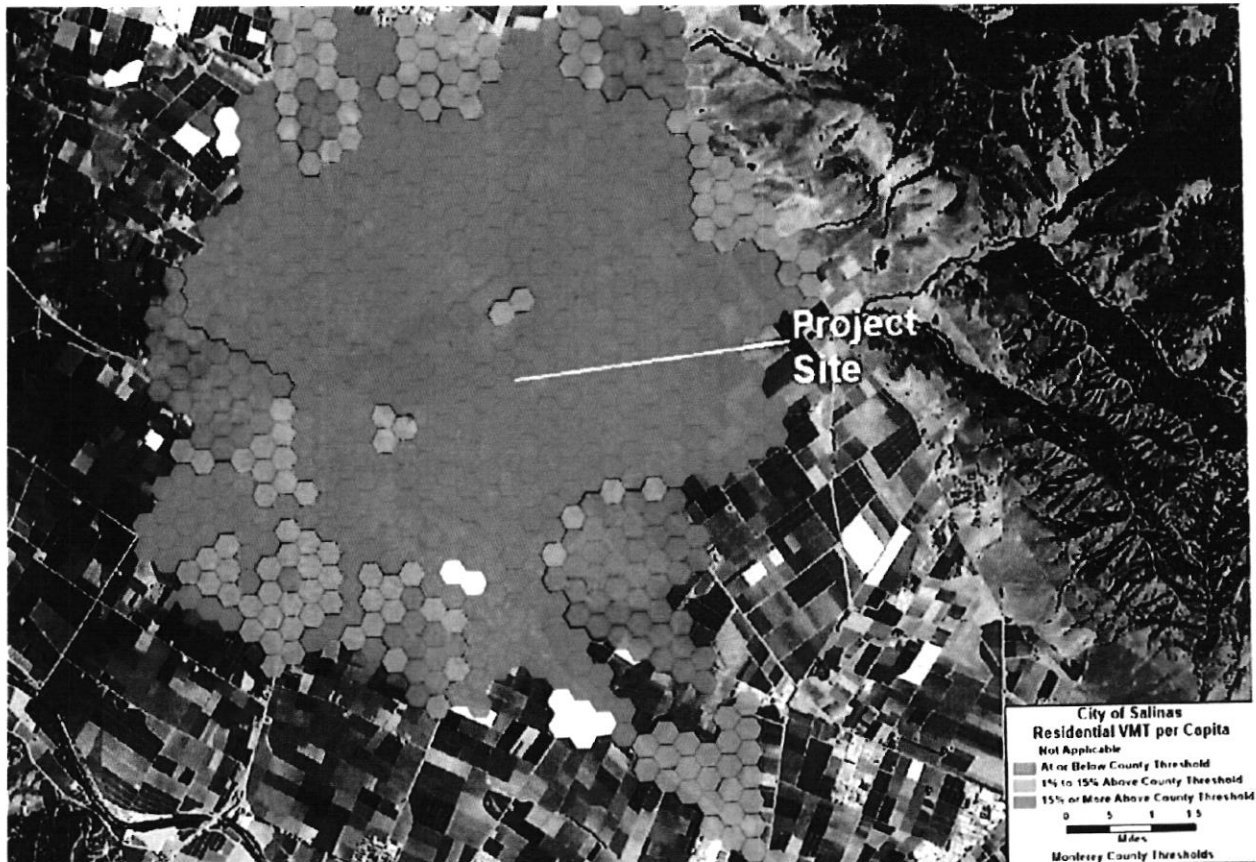
family homes proposed. This would mean additional cost and time to evaluate these impacts and to determine mitigation for any added impacts to the transportation network to the City.

As presented to the Commission at its October 2020 meeting, SB 743 has required changes in how transportation environmental impacts are evaluated under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The adopted VMT policy provides a process and methodology to evaluate the impacts of this development in compliance with SB743 summarized below.

Exhibit 1 – Process for CEQA VMT Analysis for Land Use Projects



The City's Policy includes a map-based screening criteria for non-significant transportation impacts. The map below, prepared based on State guidelines, indicate areas (green color) within the city wherein residential development in the area is below 15% of the VMT per capita threshold for significant impact. The 11 Hill Circle residential development is within the area and is therefore found not to create a significant increase in VMT.



The City's VMT policy therefore provide a responsible and compliant approach to determining impacts to the transportation system. In the case of the revised 11 Hill Circle project, the approval is not burdened with additional traffic studies, costs and delay to comply with CEQA. The City can approve needed housing development effectively in compliance with CEQA under the SB743 required VMT policy.

The 11 Hill Circle project retains transportation mitigation required with the project's consideration in 2007. The project will pay traffic impact fees, contribute to the cost of traffic signal operation at the Laurel Drive and Saint Edwards Street operation, and construct public street improvements along the site's street frontages.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

This report discusses the transportation analysis for the project and illustrates the application of the City VMT policy to one residential project. The full CEQA evaluation for this project is a

Mitigated Negative Declaration, and is not in the scope of this report. The Full mitigated Negative Declaration can be found on the City's Community Development webpage.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

The City's VMT Policy supports Councils goals of Investment Strategies/Risk Management by developing planned investments in effective and safe infrastructure.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

The VMT Policy is aligned with State and Federal goals for the reduction of green house gas and climate change. As illustrated in the report, the policy supports the production of much needed housing. The policy also supports the provision of alternative choices for travel. The policy does not change or supersede the Traffic Fee Ordinance.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: City VMT Policy

Attachment 2: Excerpts from PUD/Initial Study 11 Hill Circle (Transportation)