TOWN OF WINDSOR VMT POLICY AND SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

May 10, 2022

Planning Commission

STAFF AND PRESENTERS

Town of Windsor

Carl Euphrat, Senior Civil Engineer

Kim Voge, Planner III

W-Trans (Consulting Town Traffic Engineers)

Zack Matley, Principal

PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

1) SB 743 CEQA requirements
2) VMT Screening
3) VMT Thresholds of Significance
4) Example Residential Projects
5) Public Comment Received

OUTREACH

- October 13, 2021 Joint Planning Commission/Town Council informational VMT public meeting
- November 1, 2021 Stakeholder meeting
- December 8, 2021 Stakeholder meeting
- December 8, 2021 Community meeting
- April 7, 2022 Stakeholder meeting

1
SB 743 CEQA REQUIREMENTS

CEQA CHANGES UNDER SB 743

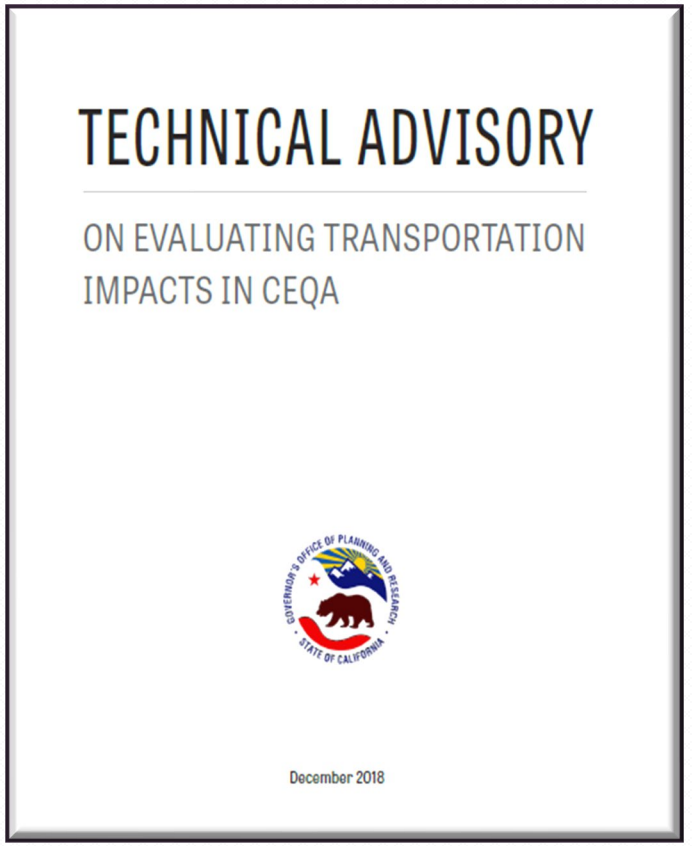
- Level of Service (LOS) is no longer used to determine transportation impacts under CEQA
- Transportation impacts are now assessed in terms of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)
- Went into effect on July 1, 2020

INTENT OF SB 743

"more appropriately balance the needs of congestion management with statewide goals related to **infill development**, promotion of public health through **active transportation**, and **reduction of greenhouse gas emissions**."

OFFICE OF PLANNING AND RESEARCH (OPR) GUIDANCE

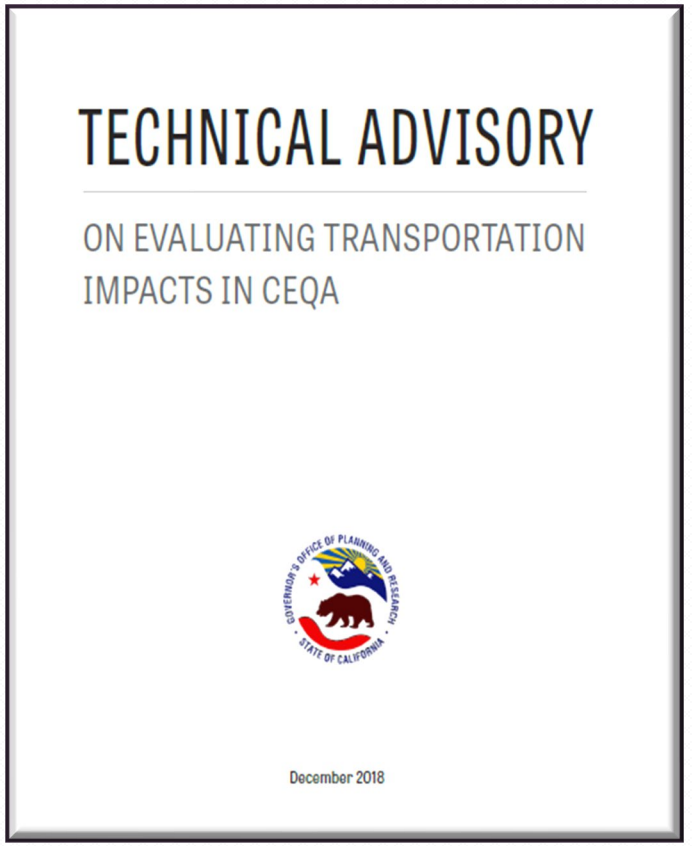
- State of California established VMT Guidelines
- Identifies “screening” criteria for projects that may be presumed to have a less than significant effect on VMT
- Identifies suggested significance thresholds for several project types
- Allows jurisdictions to adopt different screening criteria and thresholds if backed by substantial evidence



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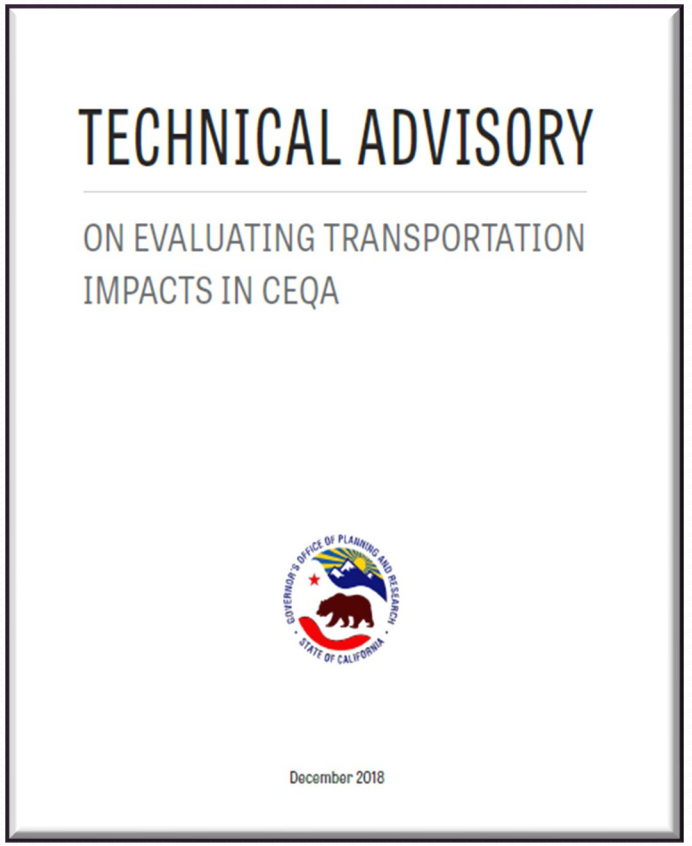
Thresholds must promote:

- Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions,
- Development of multimodal transportation networks, and
- Diversity of land uses



OFFICE OF PLANNING AND RESEARCH (OPR) GUIDANCE

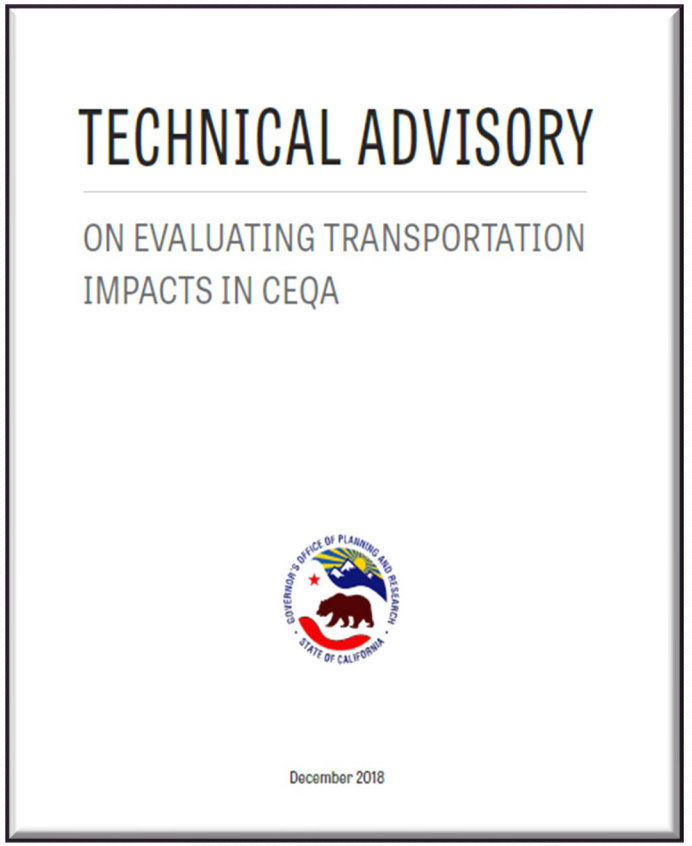
- OPR thresholds align with legally-mandated greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets established by the State
- Alternative thresholds would need to be supported by quantitative evidence demonstrating that baseline VMT would still be reduced sufficiently to achieve GHG targets
- Thresholds that are less restrictive than those cited by OPR may be legally indefensible



OFFICE OF PLANNING AND RESEARCH (OPR) GUIDANCE

Approach to Residential Screening and Thresholds

- Consider feedback from Planning Commission, Town Council, and stakeholders
- Establish screening and thresholds that support housing production and are legally defensible



2
VMT SCREENING

VMT SCREENING

- Screening refers to identifying certain types of projects that may be presumed outright to fall below VMT significance thresholds
- Screening criteria are provided in the OPR Technical Advisory, as supported by substantial evidence, and have been customized for application in Windsor
- Emphasis placed on screening residential developments to the degree possible
- More areas of Windsor qualify for residential screening than shown in October 2021, as depicted on the updated screening maps

VMT SCREENING: SMALL PROJECTS

- 110 daily trips for nonresidential uses
- 23 residential units

Customized approach mirrors OPR guidance for nonresidential uses, and uses local data to develop the number of residential units generating an equivalent level of VMT

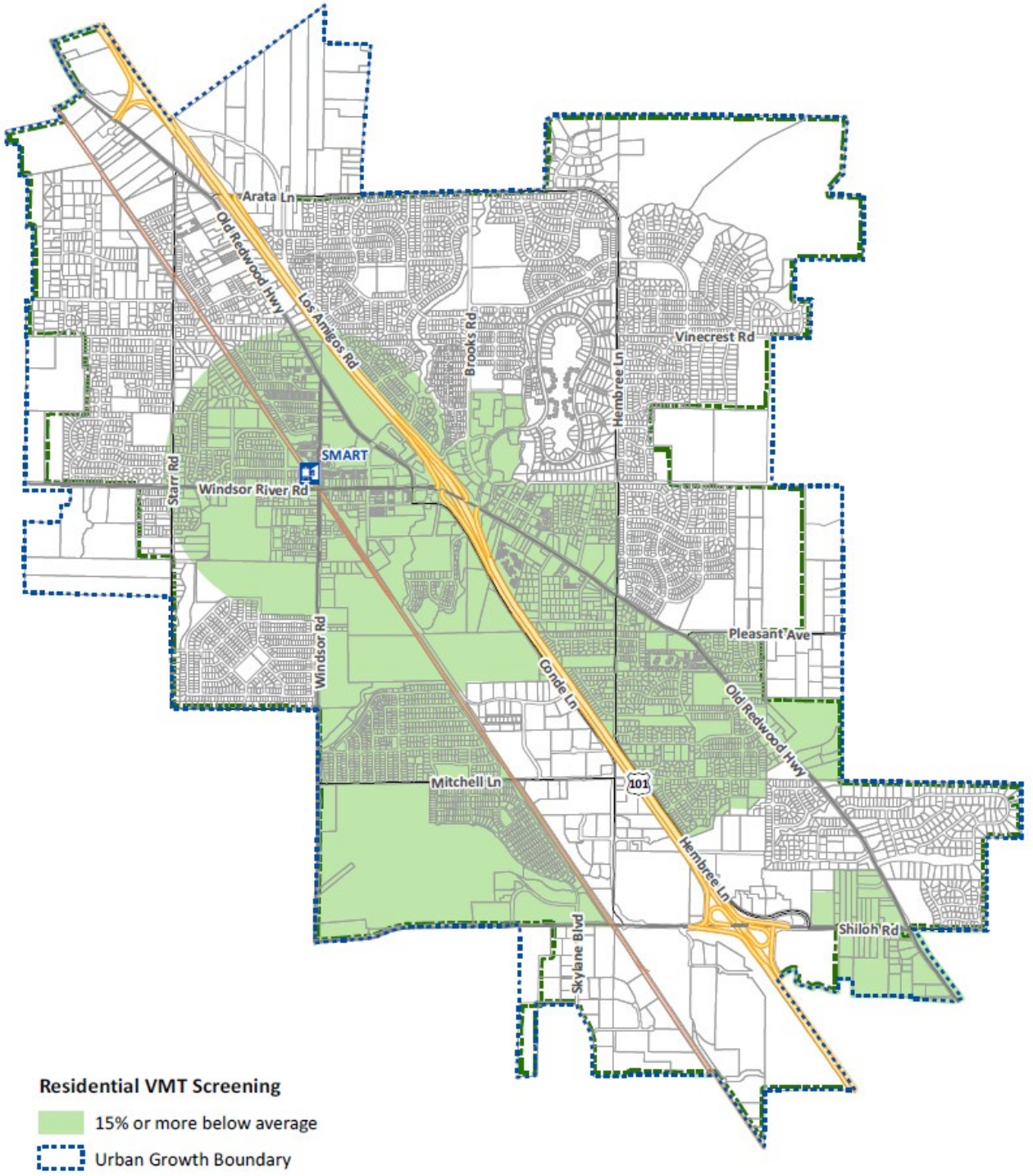
Based on Planning Commission and Town Council feedback, residential screening was maximized to the degree feasible.

VMT SCREENING: MAPPED "LOW VMT" AREAS

- Applies to residential and office/employment uses in defined areas
- Areas determined through use of the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) travel demand model
- Low-VMT areas correspond to those having a VMT per capita or employee that is 15 percent or more below the Countywide average

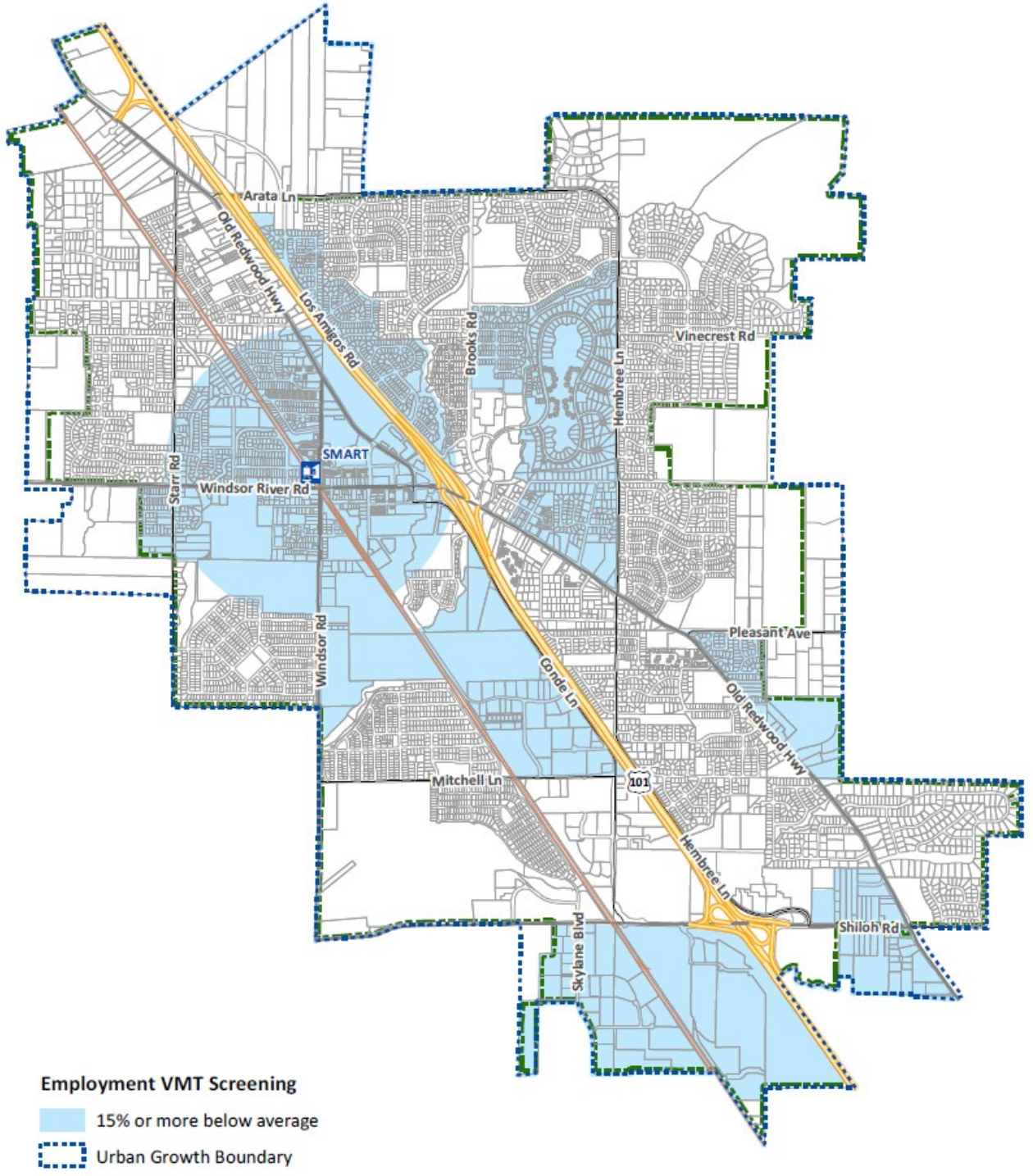
VMT SCREENING: MAPPED "LOW VMT" AREAS

Residential Uses



VMT SCREENING: MAPPED "LOW VMT" AREAS

Office/Employment Uses



VMT SCREENING: LOCAL-SERVING USES

- Retail stores under 10,000 square feet
- Grocery/drug store and medical uses under 30,000 square feet



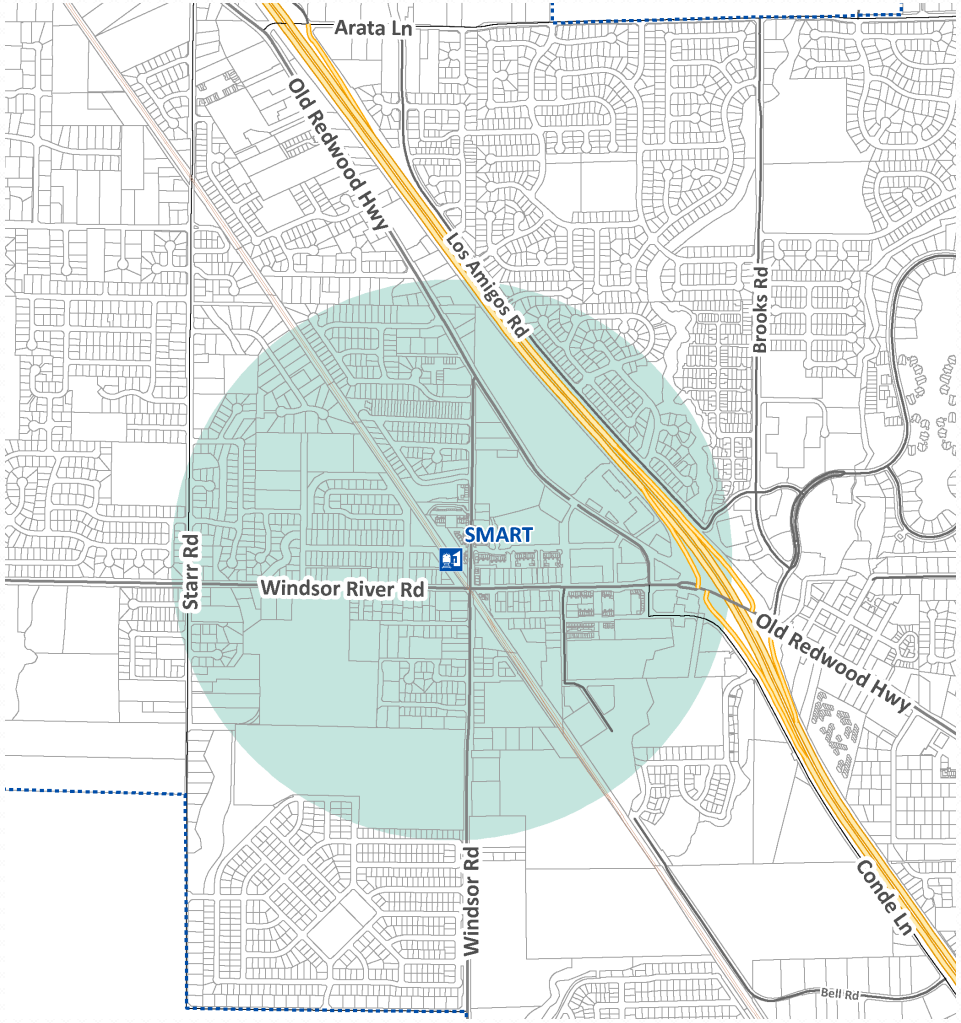
VMT SCREENING: LOCAL-SERVING COMMUNITY USES

- Local Government Facilities
- Libraries
- Parks
- Community Centers
- Post Offices
- Daycare Facilities



VMT SCREENING: TRANSIT

- Applies to development within ½ mile of major transit stops and major transit corridors
- Includes ½ mile radius around SMART station
- To qualify for screening, project cannot include excessive parking, have a floor area ratio of less than 0.75, or replace affordable residential with moderate/high income units



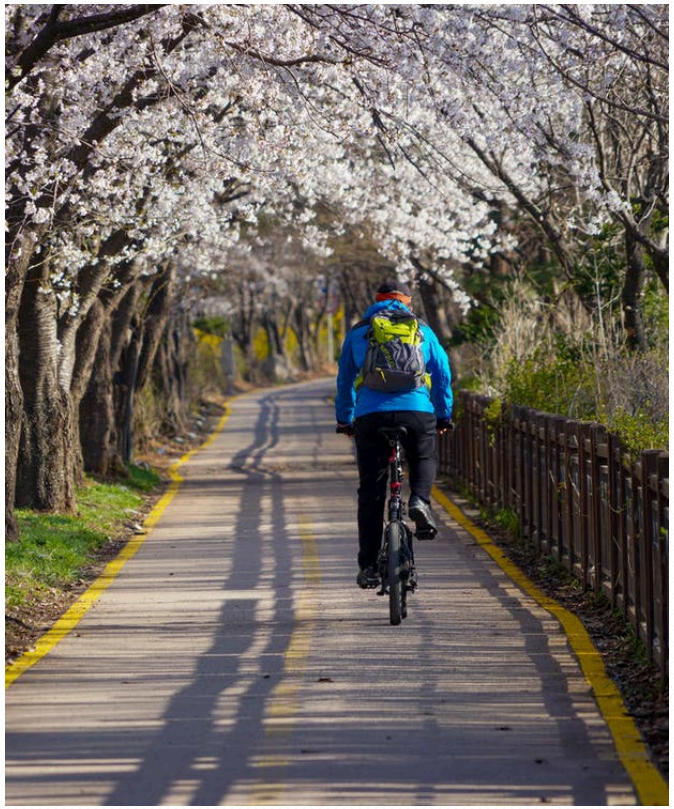
VMT SCREENING: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- Applies to 100% deed-restricted affordable housing developments
- Onsite manager's unit would also be screened

VMT SCREENING: TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Project types unlikely to result in VMT impacts by inducing vehicle travel:

- Maintenance
- Safety Improvements and Emergency Vehicle Access
- Auxiliary and Non-Through Lanes
- Traffic Control Devices
- Traffic Calming
- Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Transit Improvements
- Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure



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VMT THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

VMT THRESHOLDS

RESIDENTIAL USES

Unit of Measure:	Home-based VMT per capita
Significance Threshold:	15% below countywide average



VMT THRESHOLDS

OFFICE/EMPLOYMENT USES

Unit of Measure: Home-based commute VMT per employee

Significance Threshold: 15% below countywide average



VMT THRESHOLDS

INDUSTRIAL USES

Unit of Measure:	Home-based commute VMT per employee
Significance Threshold:	Countywide average

RETAIL USES

Unit of Measure:	Total VMT
Significance Threshold:	Net increase in countywide total VMT

VMT THRESHOLDS

MIXED USES

Unit of Measure:	Assess each land use separately using respective measures
Significance Threshold:	Apply threshold for each land use component
Minor Components:	Land uses generating <=20% of project's daily trips may be excluded with Staff approval



VMT THRESHOLDS

REDEVELOPMENT

Unit of Measure:	Total VMT
Significance Threshold:	Net increase in total VMT; otherwise, analyze using relevant threshold for the land use type

OTHER LAND USE TYPES

Unit of Measure:	Consult Town Staff
Significance Threshold:	Established on a case-by-case basis in consultation with Town Staff

VMT THRESHOLDS

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Unit of Measure: Total VMT

Significance Threshold: Induced travel demand increases total VMT



ROADWAY CONSTRUCTION FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

Significance Threshold: For local-serving roadways, assess through analysis of the project's land uses

VMT THRESHOLDS IN SONOMA COUNTY

Jurisdiction	Consistent with OPR?	Formally Adopted?
County of Sonoma	Yes	No
Cloverdale	Yes	No
Cotati	Yes	Yes
Healdsburg	Yes	No
Petaluma	No - more rigorous	Yes
Rohnert Park	Yes	No
Santa Rosa	Yes	No (in draft)
Sebastopol	Yes	No
Sonoma	Yes	No
Windsor	Yes	Pending

OPTIONS FOR EXPANDING RESIDENTIAL CEQA COVERAGE

- **Comprehensive Townwide VMT analysis and accompanying EIR**
  - Analyze Townwide VMT effects of future residential development
  - Identify quantifiable Townwide VMT reduction strategies and programs to reduce VMT impacts
  - If VMT impacts cannot be fully alleviated, mitigate to the degree feasible and adopt statement of overriding considerations
  - Individual development CEQA assessments could tier from this Townwide EIR
- **Develop or Participate in VMT Mitigation Exchanges or Banks**

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EXAMPLE RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS

EXAMPLE RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS

The Estates at Ross Ranch

- 31 units single family housing
- Not Screened by OPR or VMT Policy

Bluebird Housing

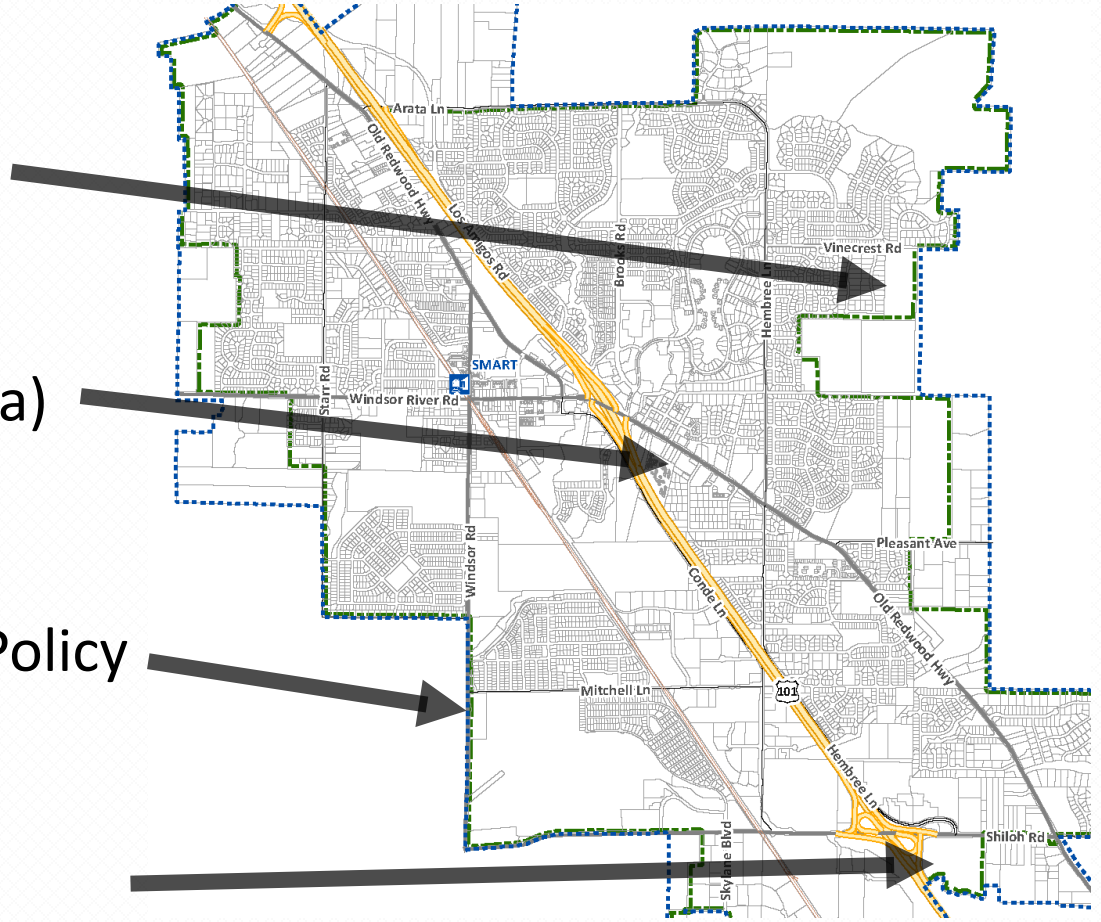
- Approximately 65 units multifamily housing
- Screened with VMT Policy (mapped low VMT area)

The Overlook

- 12 single family homes
- Currently does not screen, but would with VMT Policy

Clearwater

- Senior and Workforce Housing
- Does not screen
- Full VMT analysis required, results show no VMT impact



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PUBLIC COMMENT RECEIVED

STAKEHOLDER SUGGESTED SCREENING CRITERIA

Residential Multiple-Criteria Screening

Residential projects that meet all the following criteria are screened out from VMT analysis given close proximity to commercial uses, park sites, school sites, and public transit, creating self-supporting neighborhoods.

- The entirety of the Project is located within 0.5 miles of a property with a Neighborhood Center/Mixed Use (NCMU) Land Use Designation, as defined by the Town of Windsor's 2040 General Plan.
- The entirely of the Project is located within 0.5 miles of a "Potential School Site" or and "Existing School Site" as identified on the Town of Windsor's 2040 General Plan Land Use Diagram.
- The entirety of the Project is located within 0.5 miles of a "Proposed Park" or an existing "Park" as identified on the Town of Windsor's 2040 General Plan Land Use Diagram.
- The entirety of the Project is located within 1 mile of a Sonoma County Transit stop, running at least 6 days a week with service intervals not to exceed sixty minutes on average.

STAKEHOLDER SUGGESTED SCREENING CRITERIA

Recommendation

- While the combined criteria could have a beneficial VMT influence, there is insufficient evidence to support the claim that all residential developments exhibiting these characteristics would inherently fall below VMT significance thresholds.
- The suggested screening criteria should not be included in the Policy at this time since the State requires screening to be supported by substantial evidence.

THANK YOU

May 10, 2022

Planning Commission