

RESOLUTION NO. 949 (21)

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LOMPOC RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPT VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED THRESHOLDS AND REVISIONS (TA 21-02) TO LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW GUIDELINES AND TRAFFIC STUDY GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

WHEREAS, text amendment TA 21-02 includes the adoption of Vehicle Miles Traveled thresholds of significance and amendments to local Environmental Review Guidelines and Traffic Study Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines encourage public agencies to develop and publish generally applicable “thresholds of significance” to be used in determining the significance of a project’s environmental effects; and

WHEREAS, CEQA Guidelines section 15064.7(a) defines a threshold of significance as “an identifiable quantitative, qualitative or performance level of a particular environmental effect, noncompliance with which means the effect will normally be determined to be significant by the agency and compliance with which means the effect normally will be determined to be less than significant”; and

WHEREAS, CEQA Guidelines section 15064.7(b) requires that thresholds of significance must be adopted by ordinance, resolution, or regulations, developed through a public review process, and be supported by substantial evidence; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 743, enacted in 2013 and codified in Public Resources Code section 21099, required changes to the CEQA Guidelines regarding the criteria for determining the significance of transportation impacts of projects; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research proposed, and the California Natural Resources Agency certified and adopted, new CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 that identifies vehicle miles traveled (VMT), or the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project, as the most appropriate metric to evaluate a project’s transportation impacts; and

WHEREAS, as a result, automobile delay, as measured by Level of Service and other similar metrics, generally no longer constitutes a significant environmental effect under CEQA; and

WHEREAS, the matter was considered by the Planning Commission at a duly-noticed public meeting on July 14, 2021; and

WHEREAS, at the meeting on July 14, 2021, public comment was received, and City staff was present and answered Planning Commissioners' questions and addressed their concerns; and

WHEREAS, adopting Vehicle Miles Traveled thresholds, and revisions to local environmental review guidelines and traffic study guidelines, is not a project for purposes of CEQA (per CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5)), and therefore does not require environmental review, because it involves an administrative activity involving process only and does not have the potential for resulting in either a direct or indirect physical change in the environment.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LOMPOC RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1: The Planning Commission has independently reviewed and analyzed the proposed amendments (TA 21-02) to the Environmental Review Guidelines and Traffic Study Guidelines (Exhibits A and B hereto) to incorporate thresholds of significance for Vehicle Miles Traveled when analyzing transportation impacts of projects and finds that they reflects the independent judgement of the Planning Commission and that the action is exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(5) because it involves an administrative activity involving process only and would not result in in either a direct or indirect physical change in the environment.

SECTION 2: The Planning Commission recommends that the City Council adopt Vehicle Miles Traveled thresholds of significance for transportation impact analysis under CEQA and amendments to the Environmental Review Guidelines and Traffic Study Guidelines (TA21-02) as shown on the attached exhibits.


The Commission finds that these proposed changes:

- A. Are consistent with the 2030 General Plan;
- B. Are consistent with Lompoc Municipal Code Title 17 (Zoning);
and
- C. Are consistent with the requirements set forth in Senate Bill 743 and CEQA guidelines sections 15064.3, 15064.7 (a) and 15064.7(b).

The foregoing Resolution, on motion by Commissioner Gonzales, seconded by Commissioner Braxton, was adopted at the Planning Commission meeting of July 14, 2021 by the following vote:

AYES: Commissioner Cioni, Gonzales, Braxton, Caudillo, Badertscher

NOES: None



Brian Halvorson, Secretary



Federico Cioni, Chair

Attachments:

Exhibit A – Proposed Environmental Review Guidelines
Exhibit B – Proposed Traffic Study Guidelines