

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this section is to address the potential transportation impacts associated with the proposed specific plan.

On September 27, 2013, Governor Edmund G. "Jerry" Brown signed Senate Bill (SB) 743, which went into effect in January 2014 and directed the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to develop revisions to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines by July 1, 2014, to establish new criteria for determining the significance of transportation impacts and define alternative metrics for traffic level of service (LOS). This started a process that has changed the requirements for transportation impact analyses under CEQA. These changes include elimination of auto delay, LOS, and similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion as a basis for determining significant transportation impacts resulting from land use projects and plans in California.

On January 20, 2016, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) released the Revised Proposal on Updates to the CEQA Guidelines on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA, which was an update to Updating Transportation Impacts Analysis in the CEQA Guidelines, Preliminary Discussion Draft of Updates to the CEQA Guidelines Implementing Senate Bill 743, which had been released on August 6, 2014. Of particular relevance was the updated text of State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, which as discussed further below establishes vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts. The Guidelines became effective on July 1, 2020. As such, automobile delay as measured by LOS or similar metrics is no longer to be considered a significant environmental impact. Further, Section 21099(a)(2) of the Public Resources Code states "Upon certification of the guidelines by the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency pursuant to this section, automobile delay, as described solely by level of service or similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion shall not be considered a significant impact on the environment pursuant to this division, except in locations specifically identified in the guidelines, if any." Therefore, as LOS is no longer an environmental impact under CEQA, all analysis provided in this section related to LOS is presented for informational purposes only, and not for the purpose of determining a significant environmental impact under CEQA.

*This section is based on the findings of the following reports, included as **Appendix 3.15** of this EIR:*

- ***Supplemental Traffic Analysis for the Hitch Ranch Project in the City of Moorpark**, conducted by Stantec, December 2021.*
- ***Traffic impact Analysis for the Proposed Hitch Ranch Specific Plan**, conducted by Impact Sciences, Inc. July 2021.*

3.15.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

3.15.1.1 Transportation Study Area

As shown in **Figure 3.15-1, Project Setting**, the site is located north of Poindexter Avenue, beginning approximately 900 feet west of Moorpark Avenue (SR-23) and extending approximately 1,400 feet west of Gabbert Road. The Plan includes the extension of High Street on site, which connects Moorpark Avenue on the east and Gabbert Road on the west. The High Street extension will be built as a two-lane local collector roadway generally running parallel to Poindexter Avenue on the north side of the Union Pacific Railroad.

A local collector road (referred to herein as A Street) will be built on site from the extension of High Street approximately midway between Walnut Canyon Road and Gabbert Road to the extension of Meridian Hills Drive with a four-way stop sign intersection at North Hills Parkway. Meridian Hills Drive connects to Walnut Canyon Road through the Meridian Hills Tract 5187 development north of the Project site. The Plan will also extend Casey Road west into the site as far as A Street.

As shown in **Figure 3.15-2, Project Site Plan**, the proposed site plan assumes the dedication of corridor right-of-way and the construction of North Hills Parkway from Gabbert Road to the easterly boundary of Hitch Ranch. The “A” Street intersection with North Hills Parkway would provide full access to the site.

Regional access to the project vicinity is currently provided by the two State Route highways: Los Angeles Avenue (SR-118) and Moorpark Avenue (SR-23). Los Angeles Avenue provides access to the east to the Moorpark Freeway (SR-23) and the Ronald Reagan Freeway (SR-118); it also extends beyond the western city limits providing a route to communities in the western portion of Ventura County (e.g., the cities of Camarillo, Oxnard, and Ventura).

Bus service in the local vicinity of the Project site is provided by Moorpark City Bus. Existing bus routes operate along Los Angeles Avenue, Moorpark Avenue, High Street, Campus Park Drive, Tierra Rejada Road, Peach Hill Road, and Miller Parkway. Commuter rail service is also provided in the immediate vicinity.

Freeways

The Proposed Project would be constructed and operated in the southeastern portion of Ventura County within the incorporated City of Moorpark. Regional access to the study area is provided by State Route 118 (SR-118) and SR-23.

SR-118 is an east-west freeway that travels through the eastern portion of the City of Moorpark. Where SR-118 curves and starts to head north and south (just west of Princeton Avenue) the roadway turns into

SR-23. At the interchange with New Los Angeles Avenue, the SR-118 turns into Los Angeles Avenue, a six-lane arterial road. West of Tierra Rejada Road, the SR-118 begins narrowing, and west of Buttercreek Road becomes a two-lane collector. The SR-118 provides access to Ventura and Oxnard to the west, and Los Angeles' San Fernando Valley to the east. Caltrans traffic volume data estimate 20,200 vehicles east of Grimes Canyon Road (where the SR-118 is a local collector) and 82,000 west of Collins Drive (where the SR-118 is a freeway) in 2017. In the Ventura County CMP, the SR-118 is designated as a freeway north and east of the Los Angeles Avenue interchange and designated as a major road west of the Los Angeles Avenue interchange.

SR-23 is a north-south highway that provides access to the City of Fillmore to the north and Thousand Oaks to the south. Caltrans data on traffic volumes Caltrans data for 2017 show an annual average daily traffic of 72,000 vehicles north of Tierra Rejada Road (where the SR-23 is a freeway) and approximately 4,000 south of Spring Road (where SR-23 is a local collector).¹ South of the interchange of SR-118/SR-23/Los Angeles Avenue, the SR-23 is the Moorpark Freeway, designated as a freeway in the Ventura County CMP. North and west of the interchange, SR-23 is a local road (described below).

Local Roads

(Refer to *Figure 3.15-3 City of Moorpark General Plan Circulation Element – Highway Network, May 1992.*)

SR-23 is designated as a major road west and north of the Los Angeles Avenue interchange, running along Moorpark Avenue, Walnut Canyon Road, and Broadway Road.

Moorpark Avenue is a two-lane road designated as a north-south local collector road in the City's General Plan. It connects Walnut Canyon Road to the north and terminates to the south at the Arroyo River.

Walnut Canyon Road is a two-lane road designated as a north-south local collector road in the City's General Plan. It connects Broadway Road to the north with Moorpark Avenue to the south.

Broadway Road is a two-lane road designated as an east-west local collector road in the City's General Plan. It connects Grimes Canyon Road to the west with Walnut Canyon Road to the east.

¹ Caltrans, 2017 Traffic Volumes accessible at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/census/traffic-volumes/2017/route-22-33>

Gabbert Road is a north-south two-lane local collector road in the City's General Plan that provides access to residences north of Poindexter Avenue, and turns into Tierra Rejada Road south of Los Angeles Avenue. Gabbert Road bisects the western portion of the Project site.

High Street is a two-lane road designated as an east-west local collector road in the City's General Plan.

Casey Road is a two-lane road designated as an east-west local collector road in the City's General Plan. This two- to three-lane road starts at Walnut Canyon Road to the east and terminates in a cul-de-sac at Walnut Canyon Elementary School, at the eastern boundary of the Project site. It will be extended from its current western terminus at Walnut Canyon Elementary School westward to Street "A." Casey Road would provide primary east-west access to the eastern portion of the Project site.

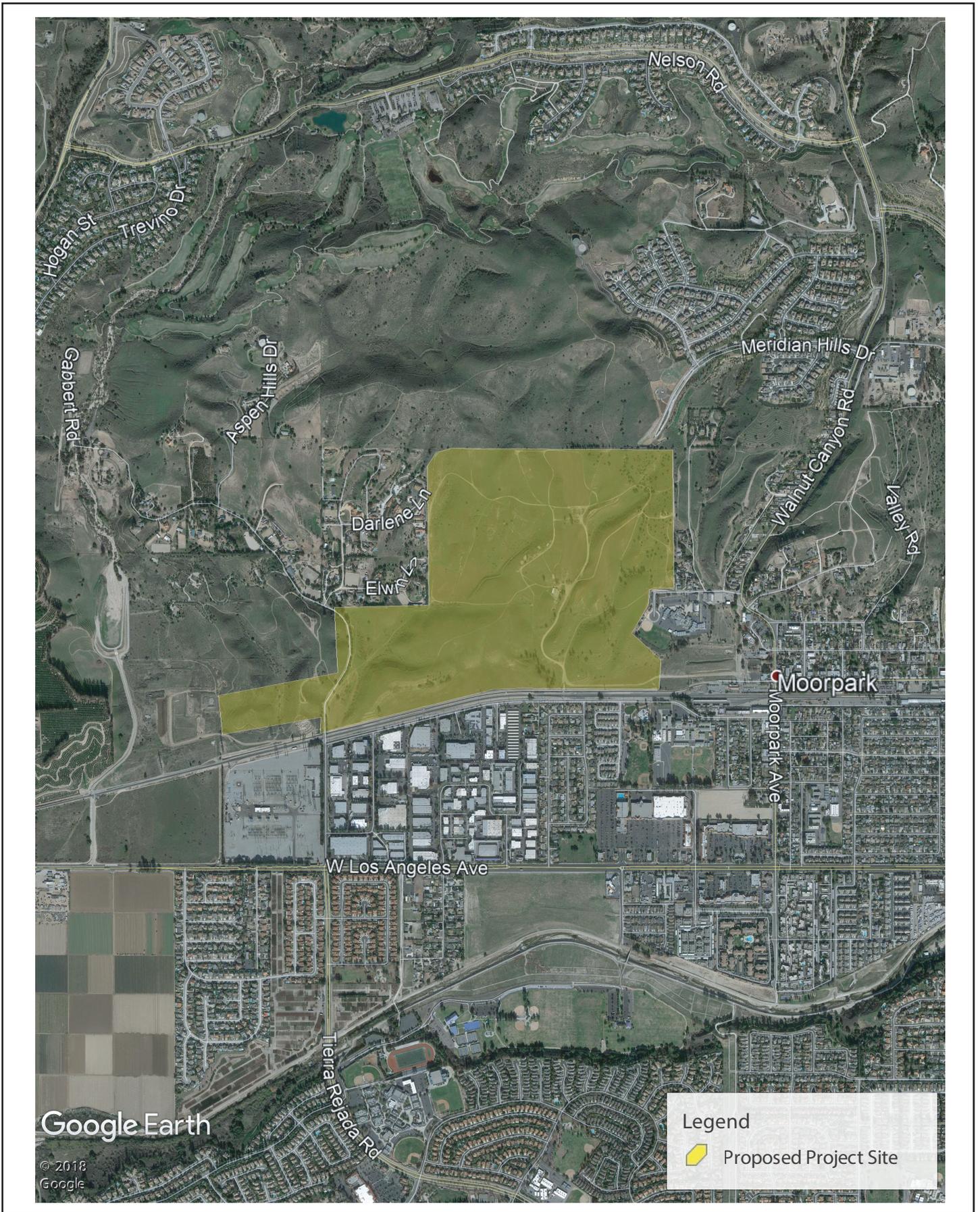
Meridian Hills Drive is a two-lane road that starts at Walnut Canyon Road to the east and terminates 0.6 miles to the west but is closed to public access west of Breezy Glen Drive.

Poindexter Avenue is a two-lane road designated as an east-west local collector road in the City's General Plan. Poindexter Avenue connects Moorpark Avenue on the east with Gabbert Road on the west.

Spring Road is a four-lane arterial road north of Los Angeles Avenue, and narrows to a two-lane collector road south of Los Angeles Avenue. Spring Road connects Walnut Canyon Road/SR-23 to the north with Tierra Rejada Road to the south.

Grimes Canyon Road is designated as a primarily north-south local collector road in the City's General Plan. Grimes Canyon Road connects Broadway Road to the north with Los Angeles Avenue to the south.

Tierra Rejada Road is designated as a four-lane arterial road primarily running east to west. Tierra Rejada Road connects Los Angeles Avenue to the northwest with the SR-23 to the east. Tierra Rejada Road continues outside of the project vicinity to connect to Madera Road in Simi Valley to the east.



SOURCE: Google, 2019. Impact Sciences, 2019

FIGURE 3.15-1

Project Location

----- PROJECT BOUNDARY



SOURCE: Comstock Homes, 2022.

FIGURE 3.15-2

Transit Service

Public transportation in the study area is provided by Metrolink, Amtrak, and Moorpark City Transit. These services include:

- Metrolink: The Metrolink Ventura County Line provides trips to Ventura to the west and Los Angeles Union Station to the southeast.
- Amtrak: The Pacific Surfliner route provides access to San Luis Obispo to the north and San Diego to the south, including stops in Santa Barbara, Ventura, Burbank, Glendale, Los Angeles, Anaheim, and Irvine in between.
- Moorpark City Transit: Routes 1 and 2 follow the same route, but in opposite directions. Routes 1 and 2 connect with Moorpark College to the northeast, Moorpark City Hall in the northwest, Moorpark High School in the southwest, and Mesa Verde School in the south, amongst other destinations. The nearest Moorpark City Transit bus stop to the Project site is located at Moorpark City Hall. Buses run Monday through Friday, from roughly 6:15 AM to 6:00 PM.

Baseline Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

The City of Moorpark has not adopted a local VMT threshold but anticipates establishing a threshold as part of a comprehensive General Plan update and Program EIR currently underway. The Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) has drafted, although not yet adopted, guidance in accordance with the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) that suggests the minimum reduction standard threshold for residential, office and industrial projects be 15% below the existing per capita VMT.² The project’s operational year would begin in 2027. Based on SCAG’s 2020 Connect SoCal Regional Transportation Plan / Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS, Connect SoCal) Growth Forecast projections and California Air Resources Board’s EMFAC model, the 2027 baseline VMT per capita for Ventura County would be 18.6 miles. This will be used as the baseline per capita VMT to determine if the project would be below the 15% threshold.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

(Refer to **Figure 3.15-4** City of Moorpark General Plan Circulation Element – Bikeway Element, May 1992)

² Ventura County Public Works. 2021. Available at: <https://s29422.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/VMT-Draft-for-Public-Review-Clean-Version.pdf>

Class II bicycle facilities are located throughout the City of Moorpark, including westbound and eastbound lanes on Poindexter Avenue to the south of the Project site. Poindexter Park, located south across Poindexter Avenue, includes a skatepark, walking paths, and covered seating areas. Other nearby recreational facilities include Arroyo Vista Community Park and Magnolia Park.

3.15.2 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

3.15.2.1 Federal Regulations

Federal Clean Air Act (CAA) Transportation Conformity

Congress passed the first major CAA (42 U.S. Code [USC] 7506(c)) in the 1970s which give EPA primary responsibility to regulate mobile and stationary sources of emissions and direct states to develop State Implementation Plans (SIPs) and required conformity determinations for areas designated nonattainment against the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), which included Ventura County. Conformity analysis and determination can be done at a regional level. SCAG provides a regional transportation conformity analysis in the Plan to address all nonattainment areas within the six-county region. The regional conformity determination is updated every four years with the RTP and associated FTIP, and is done as a part of the project-level conformity process for regionally significant projects as they occur. A hot spot analysis is provided to confirm that the project will not cause or worsen a localized violation of the standard for carbon monoxide (CO) or particulate matter (PM10 and/or PM2.5) in the existing nonattainment area. For more information, refer to **Section 3.2 Air Quality**.

Metropolitan Transportation Planning

The provisions of Title 23 USC Section 134 et seq. provides direct authority for Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) such as SCAG to act as a regional transportation planning organization with direct responsibility for carrying out the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). SCAG is tasked with carrying out the transportation planning process and adopting long-range transportation plans. Collaborating with state and public transportation operators, SCAG undertakes a performance-driven, outcome-based approach to planning for the six county regions. SCAG must prepare a transportation plan to be updated every four years, including identification of transportation facilities and factors for each mode of non-motorized transport to major roadways, transit, multimodal and intermodal facilities, and connectors that should function as an integrated system serving regional transportation functions. The scope of transportation planning process is to provide consideration of projects and strategies that will achieve the following objectives (23 U.S.C. Section 134(g)(3)(A)):

- Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity and efficiency;
- Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight;
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns; Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- Promote efficient system management and operation;
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system;
- Improve the resiliency of and reliability of the transportation system, and reduce stormwater impacts of surface transportation; and,
- Enhance travel and tourism.

Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST)

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act (Pub. L. No. 114-94), enacted in 2015, builds on the changes to federal transportation planning law made by MAP-21.³ It was the first long-term surface

³ The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) was enacted in 2012 (PL 112-141).

transportation authorization enacted in a decade that provides long-term funding certainty for surface transportation.⁴ The FAST Act authorizes \$305 billion over fiscal years 2016 through 2020 for highway improvements, highway and motor vehicle safety, public transportation, motor carrier safety, hazardous materials safety, rail, and research, technology, and statistics programs. The FAST Act maintains the focus on safety, keeps intact the established structure of the various highway-related programs, continues efforts to streamline project delivery, and provides a dedicated source of federal dollars for freight projects.

Under the FAST Act and its predecessors, MPOs such as SCAG must prepare long-range transportation plans and update them every four years if they are in areas designated as “nonattainment” or “maintenance” for federal air quality standards. Per federal requirements, long-range transportation plans must:

- be developed through an open and inclusive process, that ensures public input; seeks out and considers the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems;
- consults with resource agencies to ensure potential problems are discovered early in the planning process;
- be developed for a period of not less than 20 years into the future; long-range transportation plans must reflect the most recent assumptions for population, travel, land use, congestion, employment and economic activity;
- have a financially-constrained element, transportation revenue assumptions must be reasonable, and the long range financial estimate must take into account construction-related inflation costs;
- include a description of the performance measures and performance targets used in assessing the performance of the transportation system;
- include a system performance report evaluating the condition and performance of the system with respect to performance targets adopted by the state that detail progress over time;
- include multiple scenarios for consideration and evaluation relative to the state performance targets as well as locally-developed measures;

⁴ Federal Highway Administration. *Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act*. Available at: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/>, accessed December 18, 2018.

- conform to the applicable federal air quality plan, called the State Implementation Plan, for ozone and other pollutants for which an area is not in attainment; and,
- consider planning factors and strategies in the local context.

3.15.2.2 State

Senate Bill 743

Senate Bill 743 (SB 743) was enacted in 2013 and became effective in July 2014. It requires OPR and the Natural Resources Agency to amend the *CEQA Guidelines* to establish new criteria for determining the significance of transportation impacts and define alternative metrics for traffic level of service (LOS). This started a process that has changed the requirements for transportation impact analyses under CEQA. These changes include elimination of auto delay, LOS, and similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion as a basis for determining significant transportation impacts resulting from land use projects and plans in California (Pub. Res. Code § 21099(b)). The criteria are to promote GHG reduction, multi-modal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses.

In November 2018, the Natural Resources Agency issued a Final Statement of Reasons explaining the Agency's reasons for adopting these updates, as well as the policy, legal and factual bases for the changes.⁵ The changes have been approved by the Office of Administrative Law and were filed with the Secretary of State, becoming effective on December 28, 2018.⁶ The Guidelines establish VMT (vehicle miles traveled) as the preferred transportation impact metric and became effective on July 1, 2020. As such, automobile delay as measured by LOS or similar metrics are no longer to be considered a significant environmental impact as it pertains to circulation/transportation.

California Department of Transportation

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is responsible for operating and maintaining the State highway system. According to the *Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies*,⁷ the existing LOS should be maintained if a freeway facility is currently operating at an unacceptable LOS (e.g., LOS F). A project impact is said to occur if the project degrades LOS from an acceptable to unacceptable level. A project impact may also occur when the addition of project trips exacerbates existing LOS F conditions

⁵ California Natural Resources Agency. *Final Statement of Reasons for Regulatory Action*. Available online at: http://resources.ca.gov/ceqa/docs/2018_CEQA_Final_Statement_of%20Reasons_111218.pdf, accessed May 20, 2019.

⁶ Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR). 2019. *Current CEQA Guidelines Update*. Available online at: <http://opr.ca.gov/ceqa/updates/guidelines/>, accessed May 20, 2019.

⁷ Caltrans. 2002. *Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies*. December.

and leads to a perceptible increase in density on freeway mainline segments or ramp junctions, or a perceptible increase in service volumes in a weaving area. In addition, a project impact is said to occur when the addition of project trips causes a queue on the off-ramp approach to a ramp terminal intersection to extend beyond its storage area and onto the freeway mainline.

Caltrans prepares a Transportation Concept Report (TCR), which is a long-range (20-year) planning document, for each state highway. The purpose of each TCR is to identify existing route conditions and future needs and includes a concept LOS standard.

Complete Streets Directive

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) enacted Complete Streets: Integrating the Transportation System (Complete Streets Directive) in October 2008, which required cities to plan for a “balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of streets.”⁸ A complete street is a transportation facility that is planned, designed, operated, and maintained to provide safe mobility for all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, transit vehicles, truckers, and motorists, appropriate to the function and context of the facility. Every complete street looks different, according to its context, community preferences, the types of road users, and their needs.

Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32) and Senate Bill 375 (SB 375)

With the passage of AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, the State of California committed itself to reducing statewide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. The California Air Resources Board (California ARB) is coordinating the response to comply with AB 32.

On December 11, 2008, California ARB adopted its Proposed Scoping Plan for AB 32. This scoping plan included the approval of SB 375 as the means for achieving regional transportation-related GHG targets. SB 375 provides guidance on how curbing emissions from cars and light trucks can help the state comply with AB 32.

There are five major components to SB 375. First, regional GHG emissions targets: California ARB’s Regional Targets Advisory Committee guides the adoption of targets to be met by 2020 and 2035 for each Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in the state. These targets, which MPOs may propose themselves, are updated every eight years in conjunction with the revision schedule of housing and transportation elements.

8 Caltrans, *Implementation Policy of Complete Streets: Integrating the Transportation System*, website: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/ocp/complete_streets.html, accessed on September 9, 2014.

Second, MPOs are required to prepare a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) that provides a plan for meeting regional targets. The SCS and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) must be consistent with each other, including action items and financing decisions. If the SCS does not meet the regional target, the MPO must produce an Alternative Planning Strategy that details an alternative plan to meet the target.

Third, SB 375 requires that regional housing elements and transportation plans be synchronized on 8-year schedules. In addition, Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation numbers must conform to the SCS. If local jurisdictions are required to rezone land as a result of changes in the housing element, rezoning must take place within three years.

Fourth, SB 375 provides CEQA streamlining incentives for preferred development types. Certain residential or mixed-use projects qualify if they conform to the SCS. Transit-oriented developments (TODs) also qualify if they (1) are at least 50% residential, (2) meet density requirements, and (3) are within 0.5 mile of a transit stop. The degree of CEQA streamlining is based on the degree of compliance with these development preferences.

Finally, MPOs must use transportation and air emissions modeling techniques consistent with guidelines prepared by the California Transportation Commission (CTC). Regional Transportation Planning Agencies, cities, and counties are encouraged, but not required, to use travel demand models consistent with the CTC guidelines.

California Vehicle Code (CVC)

The CVC provides requirements for ensuring emergency vehicle access regardless of traffic conditions. Sections 21806(a)(1), 21806(a)(2), and 21806(c) define how motorists and pedestrians are required to yield the right-of-way to emergency vehicles.

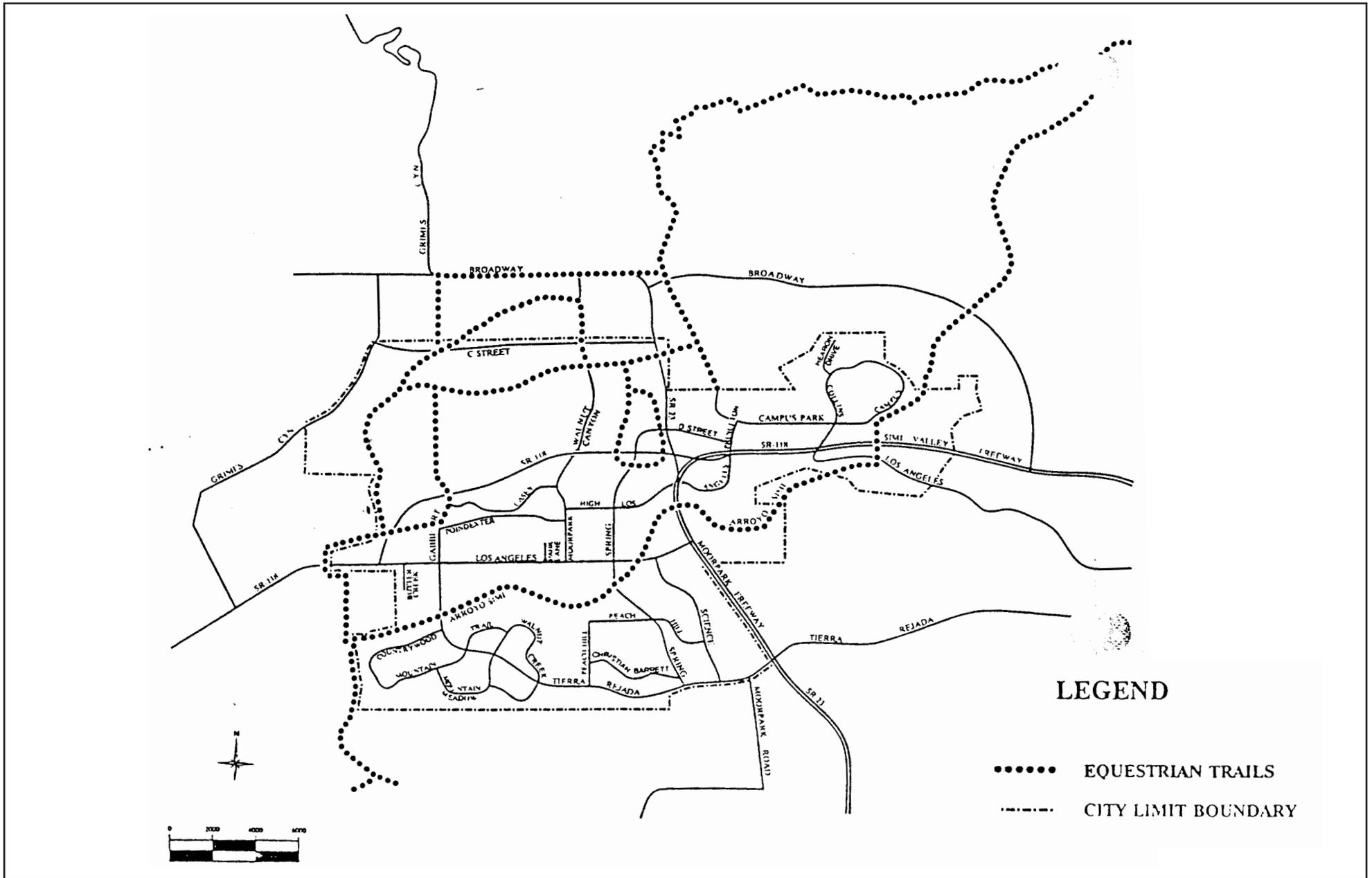
3.15.2.3 Local

City of Moorpark General Plan Circulation Element

The City of Moorpark Circulation Element was adopted in 1992. The Highway Network Plan (**Figure 3.15-3, City of Moorpark Circulation Element – Highway Network**) in the Circulation Element was based on roadways needed to accommodate the anticipated growth envisioned in the General Plan Land Use Element while achieving the identified goals for level of service.

The Circulation Element also includes a discussion of a Bikeway Plan and an Equestrian Trail Network, as shown on **Figure 3.15-4, City of Moorpark Circulation Element – Bikeway Element**, and **Figure 3.15-5, City of Moorpark Circulation Element - Equestrian Trail Network**.

The goals and policies for the Circulation Element are listed below in section **3.15.4, Project Impacts**, along with analysis to demonstrate the Proposed Project’s consistency with the City’s General Plan Circulation Element goals and policies. Those goals and policies which are not applicable to the Proposed Project have not been listed or analyzed.



SOURCE: City of Moorpark, May 1992

FIGURE 3.15-5

City of Moorpark General Plan Circulation Element - Equestrian Trail Network

3.15.3 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

In accordance with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the impact of the Proposed Project related to transportation would be considered significant if it would:

- Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b).
- Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).
- Result in inadequate emergency access.

City of Moorpark Threshold Criteria

The City of Moorpark has not currently adopted a local VMT significance threshold. However, the Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) released draft VMT thresholds that align with OPR's SB 743 Guidance and CEQA Guidelines. Using VMT as a performance metric instead of LOS is intended to discourage suburban sprawl, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and encourage the development of smart growth, complete streets, and multimodal transportation networks. As such, VCTC is proposing to adopt OPR guidance that suggests the minimum reduction standard threshold for residential, office and industrial projects be 15% below the existing per capita VMT.⁹

Based off SCAG's 2020 Connect SoCal Growth Forecast and California Air Resources Board's EMFAC model, the 2027 baseline VMT per capita for Ventura County would be 18.6 miles. A 15% reduction gives a threshold of 15.81 per capita VMT.

⁹ Ventura County Public Works. 2021. Available at: <https://s29422.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/VMT-Draft-for-Public-Review-Clean-Version.pdf>

3.15.4 PROJECT IMPACTS

Impact TRA-1 Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.

Less Than Significant

Analysis of the project's potential to conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system are discussed in **Section 3.10, Land Use and Planning**.

The Circulation Element of the Moorpark General Plan sets the overall Goals and identifies the circulation improvements necessary to provide adequate transportation throughout the City. The Circulation Element includes seven goals and 49 policies to assist in achieving these goals. Goals and policies relevant to the Proposed Project are listed below:

General

Goal 1: Provide a transportation system that supports the land use plan in the General Plan and provides for the safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services within, into, out of, and through the City of Moorpark.

Policy 1.1: The completion of the ultimate circulation system, through the improvement of sub-standard roadway segments and intersections and the construction of missing roadway links and related facilities shall be actively promoted.

Policy 1.4: New residential streets should be designed so as to discourage pass-through trips which do not begin nor end within the residential area served by the street.

Policy 1.7: Roadways, pedestrian areas, walks, street name signs and utilities in applicable outlying areas shall be designed to convey a rural appearance while providing for low maintenance costs and safe passage of vehicles, pedestrians, equestrians, and bicycles.

Goal 1 Implementation

Consistent. The Specific Plan provides for a hierarchical system of streets that implements significant components of the Circulation Element and connects with other streets and roadways to link throughout

the City and the greater area. This includes the extension of Meridian Hills Drive, North Hills Parkway, Casey Road, High Street and “A” Street. The street network provided by the Specific Plan greatly improves the fire safety and emergency access to the Meridian Hills and Gabbert Road neighborhoods as well as eliminates the sub-standard single point of access at the existing Walnut Canyon School campus.

Level of Service

Goal 2: Provide a circulation system which supports existing, approved and planned land uses throughout the City while maintaining a desired level of service on all streets and at all intersections.

Policy 2.1: Level of service ‘C’ shall be the system performance objective for traffic volumes on the circulation system. For roadways and interchanges already operating at less than level of service ‘C’, the system performance objective shall be to maintain or improve the current level of service.

Policy 2.2: Project phasing shall be coordinated with construction of on-site and off-site circulation improvements to maintain the performance standards objectives specified in Policy 2.1 and to ensure that improvements are in place when needed.

Policy 2.3: New development projects shall mitigate off-site traffic impacts to the maximum extent feasible.

Policy 2.4: All new development shall participate in a transportation improvement fee program. This fee enables circulation improvements to be funded by new development in a manner that maintains the performance objectives specified in Policy 2.1.

Policy 2.5: Driveway access points onto arterial roadways shall be limited in number and location in order to ensure the smooth and safe flow of vehicles and bicycles.

Policy 2.6: Secondary access should be required for projects located in the middle of a block adjacent to a limited-access arterial.

- Policy 2.7:** Traffic signal or stop sign installation shall be required at intersections which, based on individual study, are shown to satisfy traffic or stop sign warrants.
- Policy 2.10:** On-street parking on any new arterial streets shall be prohibited. For existing arterial streets with parking allowed, special studies should be carried out to ensure off-street parking adequacy prior to prohibiting on-street parking.
- Policy 2.11:** Adequate off-street parking shall be provided in all new or expanded projects as part of construction.

Goal 2 Plan Implementation

Consistent. The Project circulation system integrates with and extends existing streets such as Casey Road and High Street and accommodates planned future uses through the extension of North Hills Parkway.

Policy 2.1 establishes Level of Service (LOS) 'C' as the circulation system performance objective Citywide. Without the roadway improvements planned as part of the Proposed Project, the Project would be inconsistent with Goal 2, Policy 2.1, i.e., maintaining LOS 'C' for traffic volumes on the circulation system.

A Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) and a Supplemental Traffic Analysis (STA)¹⁰ were prepared in order to: 1) assess the change in traffic flow produced by the Proposed Project and cumulative traffic identified by the City for future projects; and 2) to determine if, when compared to existing conditions, the implementation of the Proposed Project and cumulative traffic impacts would cause any of the studied intersections to function below the City's LOS C performance objective as outlined in Policy 2.1. The TIA assessed 35 intersections, with the STA adding an additional two intersections:

TIA Intersections

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Walnut Canyon Rd & Broadway Rd | 19. Mountain Trail Rd & Tierra Rejada Rd |
| 2. Walnut Canyon Rd & Championship Dr | 20. Mountain Meadow Dr & Tierra Rejada Rd |
| 3. Walnut Canyon Rd & Spring Rd | 21. Walnut Creek Rd & Tierra Rejada Rd |
| 4. Walnut Canyon Rd & Casey Rd | 22. Peach Hill Rd & Tierra Rejada Rd |
| 5. Moorpark Ave & High St | 23. Spring Rd & Tierra Rejada Rd |
| 6. Spring Rd & High St | 24. Moorpark Rd & Tierra Rejada Rd |
| 7. Gabbert Rd & Poindexter Ave | 25. SR-23 SB ramps & Tierra Rejada Rd |

¹⁰ Both of these studies are included in Appendix 3.15 to this EIR.

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|--|---|
| 8. Moorpark Ave & Poindexter Ave/1st St | 26. SB-23 NB ramps & Tierra Rejada Rd |
| 9. Somis Rd & Los Angeles Ave | 27. Moorpark Rd & Santa Rosa Rd |
| 10. Grimes Canyon Rd & Los Angeles Ave | 28. Broadway Rd & Grimes Canyon Rd |
| 11. Tierra Rejada Rd & Los Angeles Ave | 29. Championship Dr & Grimes Canyon Rd |
| 12. Moorpark Ave & Los Angeles Ave | 30. Meridian Hills Dr & Walnut Canyon Rd |
| 13. Spring Rd & Los Angeles Ave | 31. SR 118 WB & Collins Dr |
| 14. Miller Pkwy/Science Dr/Los Angeles Ave | 32. SR 118 EB & Collins Dr |
| 15. SR-23 SB ramps & Los Angeles Ave | 33. "A" Street at Meridian Hills Dr (<i>Future</i>) |
| 16. SR-23 NB ramps & Los Angeles Ave | 34. "A" Street at High St (<i>Future</i>) |
| 17. Spring Rd & Peach Hill Rd | 35. "A" Street at Casey Rd (<i>Future</i>) |
| 18. Tierra Rejada Rd & Countrywood Dr | |

STA Intersections

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. Gabbert Rd & North Hills Pkwy (Future) | 2. Gabbert Rd & High St (Future) |
|---|----------------------------------|

When analyzed against existing conditions (refer to **Appendix 3.10, General Plan – Circulation Element Consistency Analysis**), the change in traffic flow generated by the Proposed Project would cause three intersections to function below the City’s LOS C performance (Walnut Canyon Rd & Spring St [PM peak hour], Walnut Canyon Rd & Casey Rd [AM peak hour], and Spring St & High St [PM peak hour]). When analyzed against Future with Project (Cumulative) conditions, six intersections (Walnut Canyon Rd & Casey Rd [AM and PM peak hour], Moorpark Ave & High St [AM and PM peak hour], Spring St & High St [AM and PM peak hour], Moorpark Ave & Poindexter Ave [AM and PM peak hour], Miller Pkwy & Los Angeles Ave [AM and PM peak hour], and SR 23 SB Ramps & Los Angeles [AM and PM peak hour]), would function below the LOS C performance objective.

As a result, a **Condition of Approval** will be required to ensure that traffic conditions in the Project area would remain consistent with the Goals and Policies identified in the **City of Moorpark General Plan – Circulation Element**. This **Condition of Approval** will require that the Project Applicant shall pay an **Area of Contribution (AOC)** fee based upon the City’s currently adopted **AOC** fee schedule (as indicated in the Development Agreement for the Project). The **AOC** fee for each individual dwelling unit shall be paid prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy for that unit. With the payment of the **AOC** fees, which are intended to be used by the City to fund roadway improvements as identified in the City’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP) list, the Project would be consistent with the Goals and Policies identified in the City of Moorpark General Plan – Circulation Element¹¹.

¹¹ The City would update the current Capital Improvement Program (CIP) list to include and address the specific improvements identified in the TIA and STA for implementation of the Proposed Project.

Roadway Standards

Goal 3: Adopt and maintain a set of roadway standards and transportation system design criteria which supports and maintains the desired character of the City of Moorpark.

Policy 3.2: Planting and substantial landscaping shall occur along major arterials to mitigate visual impacts and erosion problems.

Policy 3.3: Roadways in hillside areas shall not have a significant, adverse impact on the natural contours of the land; grading for streets shall be minimized; and harsh cut slopes which may not heal into natural appearing surfaces shall be avoided.

Policy 3.4: New collector streets in hillside areas shall be required to have curb and gutter and graded shoulders, and on-street parking shall be prohibited, as necessary, in order to provide extra safety.

Policy 3.5: Private streets shall be required to be improved to public street standards prior to dedication to the City.

Policy 3.6: The use of landscaped medians on arterial streets shall be encouraged in an effort to preserve the image of the community.

Policy 3.7: Rural and hillside road standards shall be developed, including standards for landscaping, levels of service, and road widths.

Goal 3 Plan Implementation

Consistent. The proposed circulation plan for the Project is designed to implement the General Plan Circulation element and to comply with the City of Moorpark’s standards and design criteria. Components of the access plan are illustrated on **Figure 2.0-3**. All “named” streets on **Figure 2.0-3** (including “A” Street) would be public and all other streets would be private. The primary access to the Plan area would be provided via extensions of Casey Road and High Street to the west and a connection to North Hills Parkway, a planned arterial. The proposed Plan incorporates several roadway improvements in addition to roadways internal to each Planning Area. These roadways include (1) dedication of right-of-way and construction for North Hills Parkway; (2) dedication of the Casey Road right-of-way and roadway construction; (3) dedication of the “A” Street right-of-way and roadway construction, (4) dedication of the on-site High Street right-of-way and on-site and off-site roadway construction, (5) dedication of Meridian Hills Drive right-of-way and roadway construction; and (6)

dedication of the Gabbert Road right-of-way and roadway construction. It should be noted that there will be no changes required to the Gabbert Road railroad crossing as the TIA analysis demonstrates that the build-out of the proposed project along with future traffic increases in traffic volumes do not warrant any improvements at this crossing. Refer to **Figure 3.15-6 Gabbert Roadway Alignment with Railroad Crossing**.

Transit System

Goal 4: Provide a public transportation system which serves the needs of persons living in and/or working in the City of Moorpark.

Policy 4.2: Proposed developments shall include transit facilities, such as bus benches, shelters, pads or turn-outs, where appropriate, in their improvement plans, or as needed in proximity to their development.

Goal 4 Plan Implementation

Consistent. The Specific Plan will be reviewed by the local transit authorities to evaluate transit needs. The Specific Plan will incorporate bus stops at appropriate locations to facilitate transit service between the planning area, the City and the region at the directions of the transit authority. Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities.

(Refer to **Figure 3.15-4 City of Moorpark Circulation Element – Bikeway Element**)

Goal 5: Provide a citywide system of safe, efficient, and attractive bicycle and pedestrian routes for commuter, school, and recreational uses.

Policy 5.1: New development and redevelopment projects shall be required to include safe, separate, and convenient paths for bicycles and pedestrians so as to encourage these alternate forms of non-polluting transportation.

Policy 5.2: Plans for bicycle and pedestrian facilities shall give priority to providing continuity and closing gaps in the bikeway and sidewalk network.

Policy 5.3: Proposed residential, commercial, and industrial developments shall be required to include bikeways in their street improvement plans, consistent with the Circulation Element Bikeway Network Plan, and to construct the bicycle paths, or lanes, or routes as a condition of project approval.



SOURCE: Encompass Consultant Group, 2021.

FIGURE 3.15-6

Gabbert Roadway Alignment with Railroad Crossing



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- Policy 5.4:** Development projects shall be required to participate in the funding of planned bikeways which would allow employees to utilize bicycles as an alternative to automobiles.
- Policy 5.5:** The provision and maintenance of off-street bicycle paths shall be encouraged.
- Policy 5.6:** Bicycle racks shall be required, and storage facilities shall be encouraging at new or modified public, commercial, and industrial building sites.
- Policy 5.7:** The installation of sidewalks shall be required for all new roadway construction and significant reconstruction of existing roadways, with the exception of hillside areas. If installation of sidewalks in hillside areas would result in significant grading impacts or a safety concern, special consideration shall be given to either eliminating the need for sidewalks or requiring along one side of the street only.
- Policy 5.8:** Along arterial and collector roadways, requiring the use of meandering sidewalks or the provision of landscaping between the curb and sidewalk shall be given consideration for all new projects proposed in commercial and industrial areas.
- Policy 5.9:** The design of unobstructed sidewalks, when included as part of roadway improvement plans, shall follow accepted traffic engineering practice.
- Policy 5.10:** The installation of appropriately located handicapped ramp curb-cuts shall be required for all new roadway construction and significant reconstruction of existing roadways.

Goal 5 Plan Implementation

Consistent. The design of the Specific Plan includes ADA compliant sidewalks, and dedicated bicycle lanes within appropriate roadway designs and provides an integrated trail system with improved trail heads to facilitate pedestrian and bicycle uses. Major roadways through the development will be landscaped with native and adaptive plant materials and maintained by the HOA. Specifically, North Hills Parkway would be developed as a four-lane road, consisting of two vehicle-travel lanes plus bike lanes (in each direction) with a total right-of-way corridor dedication width of 200 feet with controlled

access and restricted parking. A 14-foot wide landscaped median would be provided. The roadway also includes a 14-foot wide parkway section. The north side of the parkway would provide for a 12-foot wide multi-use trail. Bike racks will be installed at all active park and recreation areas.

Equestrian Facilities

(Refer to **Figure 3.15-5 City of Moorpark Circulation Element – Equestrian Trail Network**)

Goal 6: Provide equestrian trails for recreational use.

Policy 6.1: New development projects shall provide equestrian trail linkages to regional parks and to regional trail systems consistent with the Circulation Element Equestrian Trail Network Plan.

Policy 6.2: New residential developments shall be encouraged to provide equestrian paths.

Policy 6.3: Multi-use equestrian, bicycle, and pedestrian trails shall be encouraged wherever feasible.

Goal 6 Plan Implementation

Consistent. The Specific Plan provides for an interconnected system of public multi-use trails throughout the Project area open spaces with links to existing adjacent equestrian uses and local and regional trails.

Transportation Demand Management

Goal 7 Develop and encourage a transportation demand management system to assist in mitigating traffic impacts and in maintaining a desired level of service on the circulation system.

Policy 7.1: To reduce energy consumption, noise pollution and air pollution, employment generating developments shall provide incentives to employees to utilize alternatives to the conventional automobile, such as walking, bicycles, carpools, vanpools, buses, and commuter rail.

Policy 7.3: Alternate forms of public and private transit which give routing, scheduling and planning priority to the work force, youth,

handicapped, senior citizens and shoppers shall be provided to the extent feasible.

Goal 7 Plan Implementation:

Consistent. The Hitch Ranch Specific Plan includes bikeways and trails that will encourage the use of alternative transportation by connecting to the city's bike and trail system. Additionally, the project will provide multi-family housing in close proximity to transit (Moorpark Amtrak and Metrolink stations, and bus routes) and employment opportunities.

Consistency Analysis Conclusion

While the Proposed Project would result in a reduction in level of service at three intersections, this change in conditions would not be an environmental impact under CEQA. Public Resources Code section 21099(b)(2) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(a) specifically indicate that level of service is no longer an environmental impact under CEQA. Therefore, the Proposed Project is consistent with the goals and policies of the City of Moorpark General Plan Circulation Element and impacts regarding a conflict between the project and a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities would be less than significant.

For further discussion regarding the Hitch Ranch Specific Plan's consistency with the Goals and Policies of the City of Moorpark General Plan Circulation Element, please refer to **Section 3.10, Land Use**.

Impact TRA-2 Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3(b).

Less than Significant

For land use projects, the intent of this threshold is to assess whether a land use or plan causes substantial vehicle miles traveled. The Plan would have a significant impact if the Plan's VMT exceeds the threshold. OPR issued proposed updates to the CEQA guidelines in November 2017 and an accompanying technical advisory guidance finalized in December 2018 (*OPR Technical Advisory*) that amends the Appendix G question for transportation impacts to delete reference to vehicle delay and level of service and instead refer to Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)(1) of the CEQA Guidelines asking if the project will result in a substantial increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The California Natural Resources Agency certified and adopted the CEQA Guidelines in December of 2018 and are now in effect. In the absence of any formal guidelines and data from the City of Moorpark, VCTC, or SCAG, this analysis summarizes an approach that is consistent with OPR Guidance for implementing SB 743.

Pursuant to the December 2018 *OPR Technical Advisory*, lead agencies have the discretion to choose the most appropriate methodology for evaluating project VMT. Based on OPR's recommendations, this analysis includes the following general assumptions applicable to a residential development:

- The VMT metric applies to light-duty vehicles and trucks. Given the nature of residential development, medium- and heavy-duty truck VMT was not evaluated.
- The VMT analysis examines the entirety of VMT associated with the project, not just travel within the City of Moorpark.
- While estimating VMT is best done through tour-based modeling using a regional travel demand model, this analysis uses publicly available information.

In the absence of formal guidance or policies from local agencies, the project is assumed to have a less than significant impact if daily VMT would be 15 percent or more lower than the average daily per capita VMT in Ventura County.^{12,13} Based on data from SCAG and the California Air Resources Board, the average daily VMT per capita would be 18.6 in Ventura County in 2027, the projected operational date of the Proposed Project.¹⁴ This calculation is based on VMT forecasts from the California Air Resources Board and population forecasts from SCAG's Connect SoCal adopted growth forecast (see attached worksheets for these calculations). Based on this, a 15 percent reduction would result in an average daily per capita VMT target of 15.8 in 2027.

The Proposed Project could generate about 46,342 daily VMT, based on average household density in the City of Moorpark and the average per capita VMT for Ventura County.¹⁵ However, given the immediate proximity of the Moorpark Metrolink station, a shift in mode share from drive alone commutes to rail transit is appropriate. Assuming modest mode for Metrolink use from the future development, 102 daily vehicle trips from single-family homes and 266 daily vehicle trips from multi-family homes are shifted to Metrolink. The model assumes the Metrolink mode share of 2.5 percent for the single-family homes and 5.0 percent for the multifamily homes, based on their proximity to commuter rail service. This represents

¹² While OPR suggests that projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per day could be screened out from further VMT-based analysis, the Proposed Project would exceed this daily threshold and not be exempt from further analysis.

¹³ OPR finds that certain projects within ½-mile of an existing major transit stop will have a less-than-significant impact on VMT. While the project is near the Moorpark Metrolink station, the residences are generally more than ½-mile from the station's platforms.

¹⁴ Assumes 3.67 persons per dwelling unit (SCAG's 2016 RTP growth forecast for City of Moorpark in 2027) and 18.8 per capita daily VMT.

¹⁵ Assumes 3.67 persons per dwelling unit (SCAG's 2016 RTP growth forecast for City of Moorpark in 2027) and 18.8 per capita daily VMT.

an incremental mode share beyond baseline 0.85 percent public transit mode share (US Census American Communities Survey 5- Year Estimate, 2017). It also assumes a weighted mode share of 0.5 percent for the single-family homes and 1.0 percent for the multi-family homes, which factors in the likely use of Metrolink trains for commuting purposes. The model assumes 33 percent of average daily travel is commute related and 4.3 average weekly days for Metrolink riders based on the statistics provided in the Metrolink 2018 Origin-Destination Study for Ventura County Stations.¹⁶

This mode shift of future residents from auto to Metrolink reduces 12,757 average VMT per day from baseline daily VMT. Because each Metrolink trip reduces 34.2 miles of VMT, the per capita VMT would be approximately 13.6, a 27.1 percent reduction from the Countywide average.¹⁷

Until the City, VCTC, and/or SCAG develop formal protocols and policies for judging the VMT impacts of projects, this analysis and the use of a 15 percent reduction threshold is consistent with OPR guidance. As such, this analysis finds that transit mode share from Metrolink use would reduce 27.1 percent of VMT from the Proposed Project, resulting in a daily per capita rate of 13.6. Because this result is lower than the 15.8 per capita target that represents a 15 percent reduction from Countywide per capita targets, the Proposed Project would be considered less than significant for VMT impacts.

Impact TRA-3 Substantially increase hazards due to geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).

Impact TRA-4 Result in inadequate emergency access.

Less than Significant

The Project site's internal circulation system does not have any hazardous design features like sharp curves or complex intersections that could impede ingress and egress for emergency vehicles. Specifically, the primary collector roads (e.g., Casey Road, High Street, "A" Street, North Hills Parkway, Meridian Hills Drive) all would be designed to the City's standards for such roadways. A roundabout at the junction of Meridian Hills Drive and "A" Street would be designed with sufficient radius to allow emergency vehicles to navigate this. Local roads serving the residences would not include any sharp curves or other design features that would impede emergency access. Cul-de-sacs would be designed with sufficient turning radii for larger emergency vehicles. No roads would be permanently closed

¹⁶ Metrolink 2018 Origin-Destination Study for Ventura County Stations, <https://metrolinktrains.com/globalassets/about/agency/facts-and-numbers/metrolink-2018-od-study.pdf>, accessed November 15, 2021.

¹⁷ Assumes average trip length of Metrolink trips from Ventura County stations of 34.2 miles (Metrolink 2018 Origin-Destination study).

during the construction of the Proposed Project. Further, the Union Pacific railroad crossing at Gabbert Road between Poindexter Avenue and the newly extended High Street would remain in place both during construction and upon completion of the project. It should be noted that there will be no changes required to the Gabbert Road railroad crossing as the TIA analysis demonstrates that the build-out of the proposed project along with future traffic increases in traffic volumes do not warrant any improvements at this crossing (refer to **Figure 3.15-6, Gabbert Roadway Alignment and Railroad Crossing**). As such, no structures would be built that could impair execution of emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans.

In the long-term, development of the Project site would replace dead-end cul-de-sacs at several locations (e.g., High Street, Casey Road, Meridian Hills Drive) with through access to the larger transportation network. The proposed circulation improvements to be implemented under the Hitch Ranch Specific Plan would provide additional access for potential movement of emergency equipment for locations north, east and west of the Project site, including the existing Gabbert Estates community at the north end of Gabbert Road. The proposed circulation improvements would provide alternative east/west access via the Casey Road, High Street, and "A" Street extensions, and ultimately via the four-lane arterial North Hills Parkway proposed through the central portion of the Project site once it has been constructed. This would improve emergency access throughout the vicinity by increasing the options for accessing emergency events.

No roads would be permanently closed during the construction of the Proposed Project. In addition, no structures would be built that could impair execution of emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans.

3.15.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Transportation analyses should consider both short-term and long-term project effects on VMT. Short-term effects are evaluated in the detailed project-level VMT analysis summarized above. Long-term, or cumulative, effects are determined through a consistency check with SCAG's RTP/SCS. The RTP/SCS is the regional plan that demonstrates compliance with air quality conformity requirements and GHG reduction targets. As such, projects that are consistent with the RTP/SCS in terms of development, location, density, and intensity, are part of the regional solution for meeting air pollution and GHG reduction goals. Projects that are deemed to be consistent would have a less than significant cumulative impact on VMT. Development in a location where the RTP/SCS does not specify any development may indicate a significant impact on transportation. Based on the above Project-related VMT analysis which concludes that the Proposed Project falls under the impact thresholds and thus is already shown to align

with the long-term VMT and GHG reduction goals of SCAG's RTP/SCS, no cumulative VMT impacts are anticipated.

3.15.6 MITIGATION MEASURES

3.15.6.1 Project's Traffic Mitigation Measures under CEQA

No mitigation measures are required.

3.15.7 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Project impacts under CEQA criteria would be less than significant.