

# CITY OF SAN LEANDRO PROPOSED GUIDELINES FOR ANALYZING VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED (VMT)



City Council  
February 5, 2024



# Overview

1. Legislative Requirements
2. What is VMT?
3. Proposed Text Amendments to the General Plan
4. Staff Recommendations





# Legislative Requirements

- SB 743 (2013) requires lead agencies to replace level of service (LOS) or other measures of traffic congestion in environmental documents to:
  - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
  - Develop multimodal transportation networks
  - Encourage diversity of land uses
- In support of SB743, the State's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) released a Technical Advisory in December 2018
  - OPR recommends that lead agencies replace LOS with VMT-based metrics

## TECHNICAL ADVISORY

ON EVALUATING TRANSPORTATION  
IMPACTS IN CEQA



December 2018



# Legislative Requirements

- Since July 1, 2020, all CEQA documents required to use VMT as the primary metric to identify transportation impacts
- City of San Leandro using VMT since 2020
  - Case-by-case decisions
  - Relying on OPR Guidance
- City formalizing VMT policy now:
  - Based on experience over the last few years
  - MTC will give preference in funding to jurisdictions that adopt VMT policy

## TECHNICAL ADVISORY

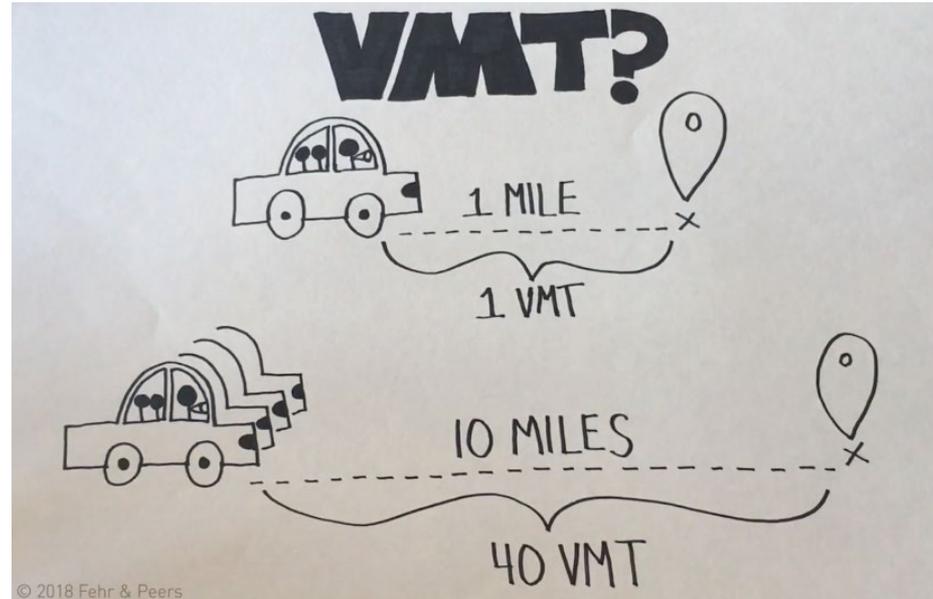
ON EVALUATING TRANSPORTATION  
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December 2018



# What is VMT?



- Captures the total amount of vehicular travel through multiplying the number of vehicle trips generated and the length or distance of each trip.
- For CEQA transportation impact analysis purposes, VMT is usually measured on a typical weekday and only includes passenger vehicles.



# Proposed Text Amendments to the General Plan

- Proposed text amendments to the General Plan would state that:
  - VMT is the primary metric to evaluate transportation impacts in CEQA documents
  - City to continue to evaluate the effects of major development projects on LOS outside of CEQA



# Staff Recommendation

Consistent with Planning Commission resolution unanimously adopted on January 4, 2024, staff recommends the City Council adopt text amendments to the Transportation Element of the General Plan to:

- Formalize the replacement of LOS with VMT as the criteria to be used for transportation analysis under CEQA in the City of San Leandro
- Establish the appropriate context for LOS-based analyses



# ADDITIONAL SLIDES



## 1. BACKGROUND

# What is VMT?



## Absolute Value

- The total amount of daily VMT to and from a place, or on a roadway
- Tends to be a “big” number
- Directly related to total **amount** of land use
- This can be further divided by **trip purpose**



## Per Capita

- Absolute VMT divided by the number of residents, workers, or other population
- Tends to be a “small” number
- Directly related to the **efficiency of the project location** and the **land use type**
- Can be divided by **trip purpose**



## 1. BACKGROUND

# What is VMT?

What VMT is:

- Measures amount of driving
- More densely developed areas with variety of land uses tend to have shorter trip lengths = lower VMT rate

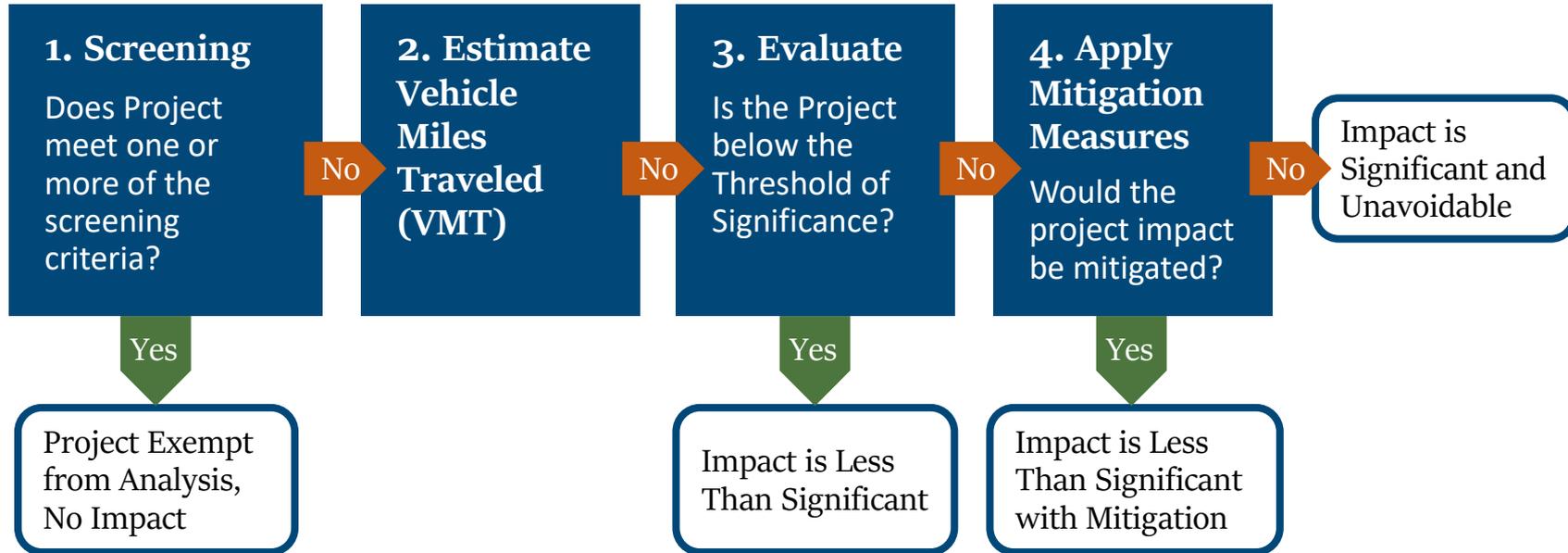
What VMT is not:

- VMT rate and level of traffic congestion are not necessarily related
- Low VMT rate  $\neq$  low traffic congestion





# VMT Analysis Process

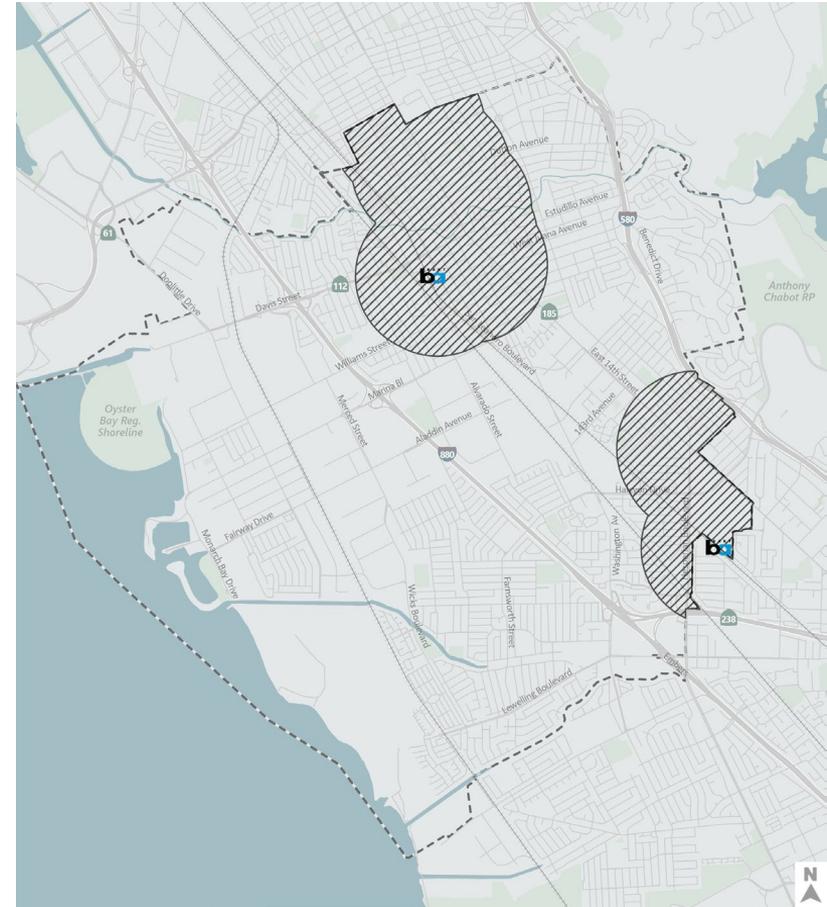




## 2. PROPOSED VMT ANALYSIS PROCESS

# Screening

- lead agencies may use screening criteria to quickly identify low-VMT projects that do not need detailed analysis
- Proposed Screening Criteria in San Leandro:
  1. CEQA Exemption
  2. Small Project
  3. Local Serving
  4. Affordable Housing
  5. Transit Priority Area
  6. Low-VMT Area
  7. Infill Residential Development

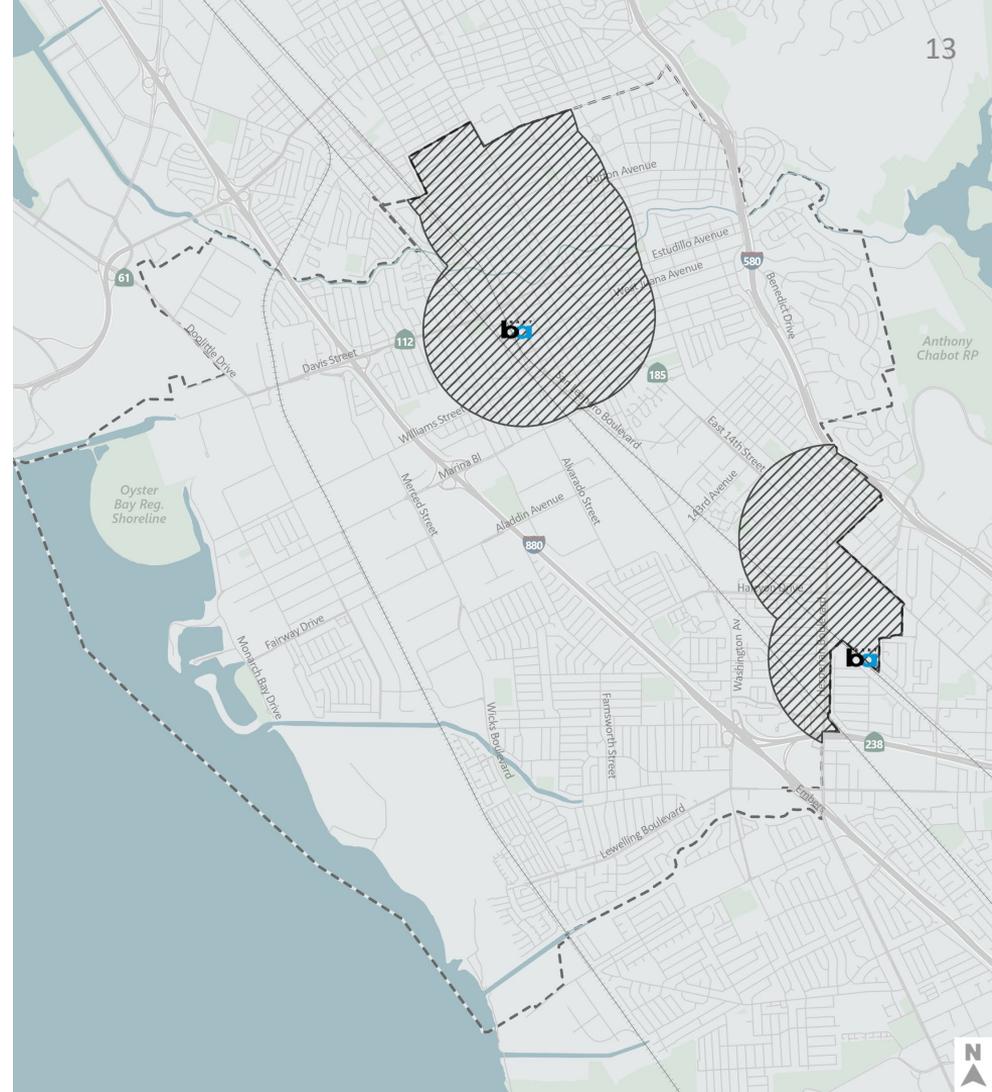




# Screening Criteria

## 5. Transit Priority Areas

- Projects not eligible if:
  - Density too low
  - Too much parking
  - Replace affordable housing
  - Other characteristics that indicate it would generate significant VMT

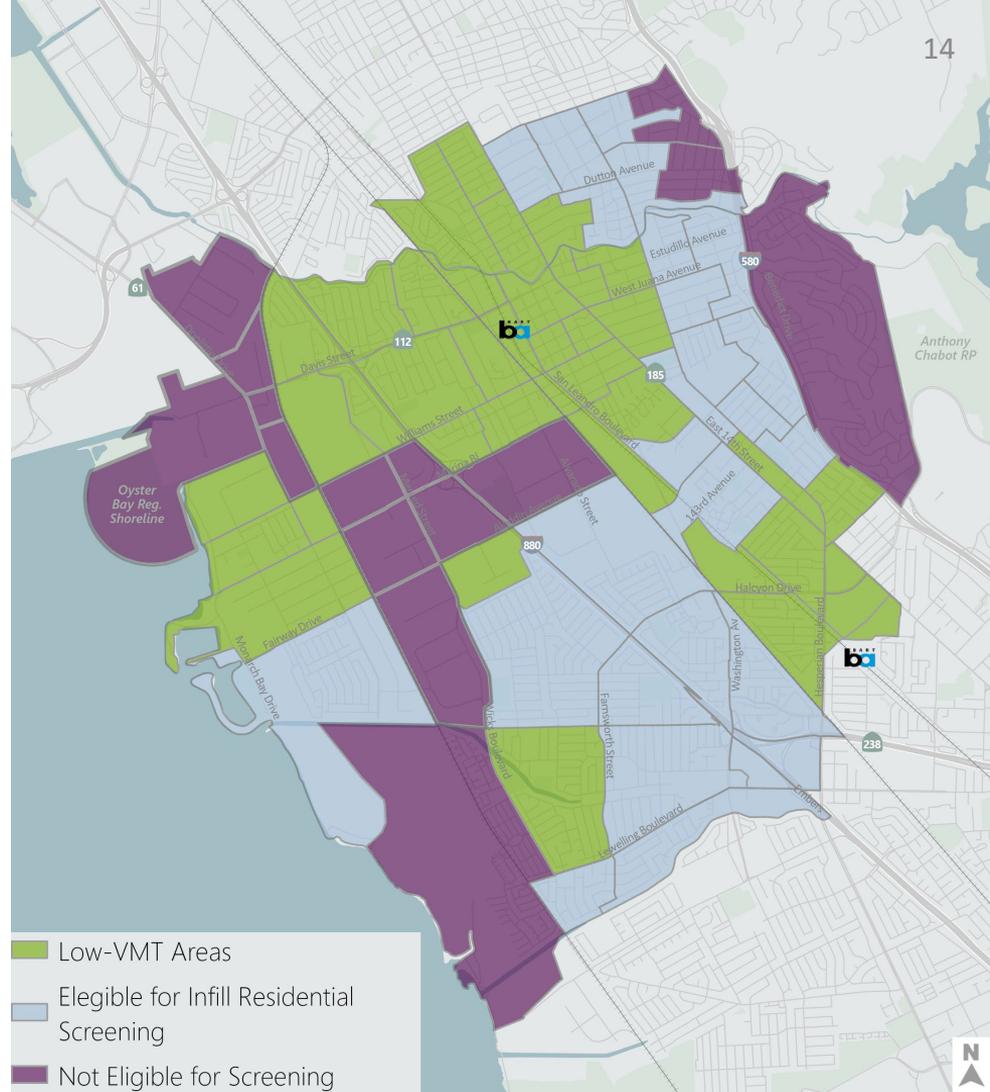




# Screening Criteria

## 6. Low VMT areas for residential projects

- Projects not eligible if:
  - Density too low
  - Too much parking
  - Replace affordable housing
  - Other characteristics that indicate it would generate significant VMT

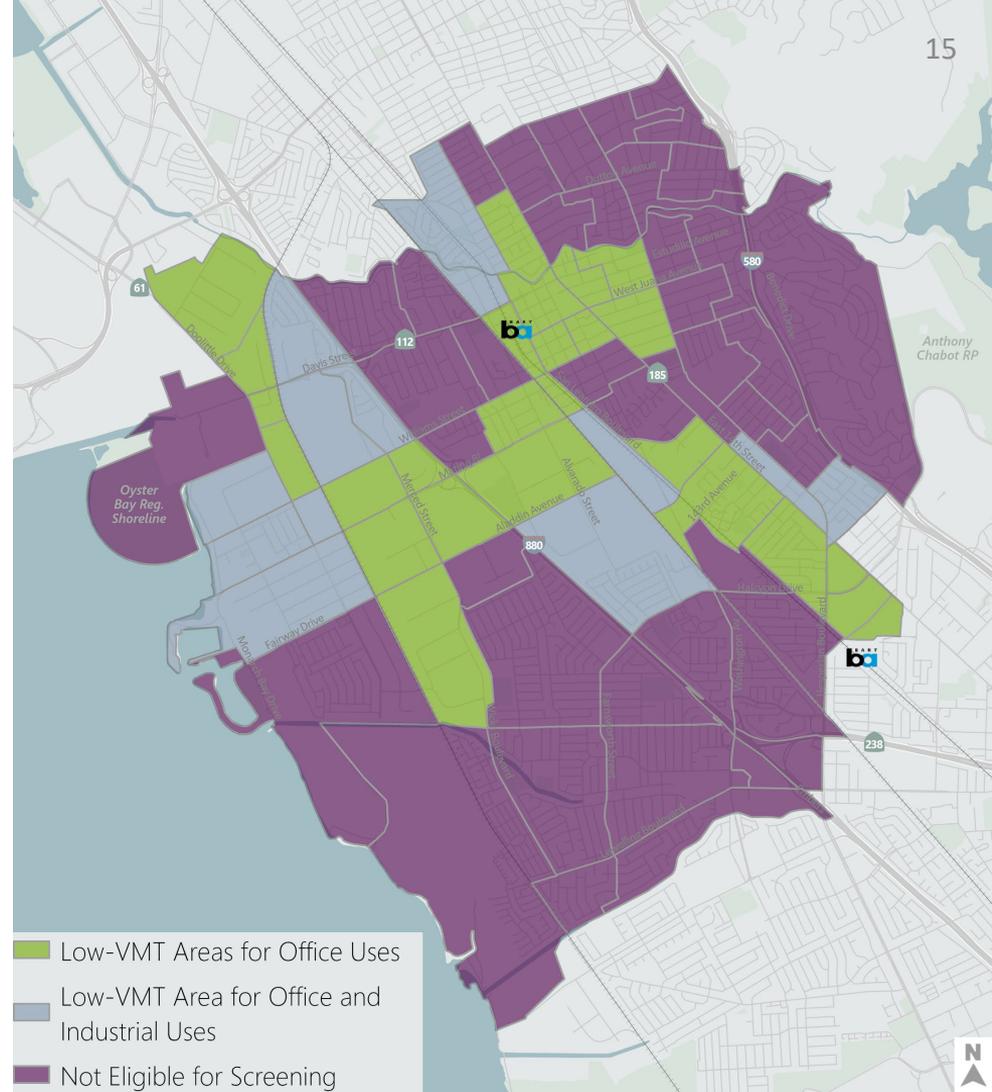




# Screening Criteria

## 6. Low VMT areas for employment-based projects

- Projects not eligible if:
  - Density too low
  - Too much parking
  - Replace affordable housing
  - Other characteristics that indicate it would generate significant VMT





## 2. PROPOSED VMT ANALYSIS PROCESS

# Thresholds of Significance

- Thresholds vary by land use type and VMT metric
- Thresholds for most common land uses:

<b><i>Residential projects</i></b>	The project's VMT exceeds the level that is 15% below existing home-based VMT per resident for the Central Planning Area
<b><i>Employment generating/office projects</i></b>	Project VMT exceeds the level that is 15% below existing home-work VMT per worker for the Central Planning Area
<b><i>Employment generating/industrial and warehouse projects</i></b>	Project VMT exceeds the level that is below existing home-work VMT per worker for the Central Planning Area



# Thresholds of Significance

- Consistent with State Guidelines, VMT generated by a project is considered a significant impact if:

<b><i>Residential (and similar) projects:</i></b>	The project's VMT exceeds the level that is 15% below existing home-based VMT per resident for the Central Planning Area
<b><i>Employment generating/office (and similar) projects</i></b>	Project VMT exceeds the level that is 15% below existing home-work VMT per worker for the Central Planning Area
<b><i>Employment generating/industrial and warehouse (and similar) projects</i></b>	Project VMT exceeds the level that is below existing home-work VMT per worker for the Central Planning Area
<b><i>Mixed-use projects</i></b>	Each land use component of the project should be analyzed independently, applying the appropriate threshold of significance from above to each land use type included in the project.
<b><i>Other land use and regional-serving project types</i></b>	Net increase in total VMT in the region (that is, the difference in total VMT in the region with and without the project), an appropriate per capita metric, or as determined by the Planning staff
<b><i>Transportation projects</i></b>	Net increase in total VMT in the region



## 2. PROPOSED VMT ANALYSIS PROCESS

# Thresholds of Significance

VMT Metric Comparison		
Geography	Home-Based VMT per Resident	Home-Work VMT per Worker
City of San Leandro	17.5	18.4
<b>Central Planning Area</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>19.2</b>
Alameda County	19.4	15.9
Bay Area Region	19.8	18.1

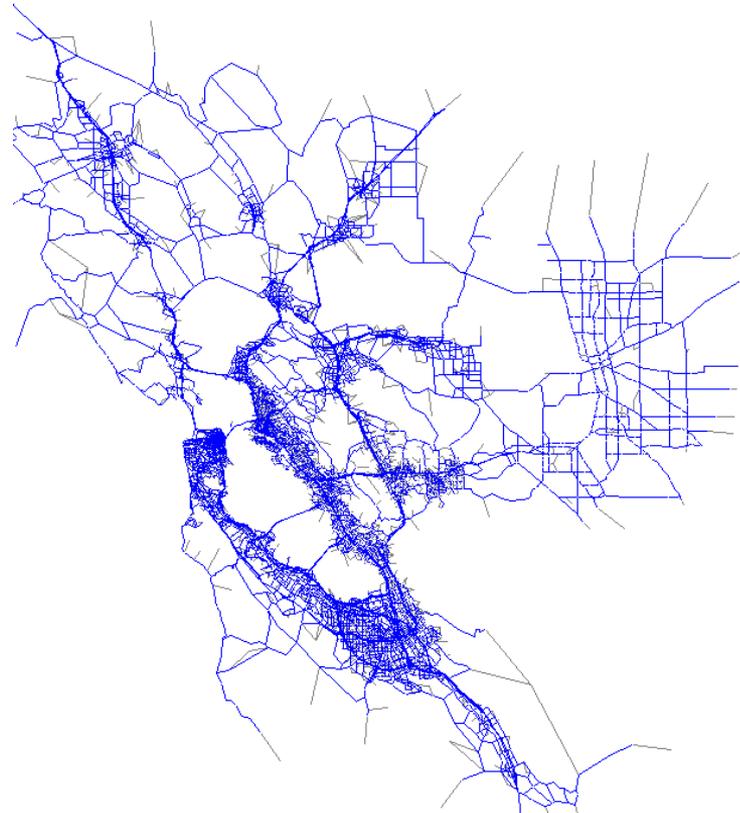
- Residential = 15% below existing home-based VMT per resident for the Central Planning Area = 17.5
- Employment/Office = 15% below existing home-work VMT per worker for the Central Planning Area = 16.3
- Employment/Industrial = Existing home-work VMT per worker for the Central Planning Area = 19.2



## 2. PROPOSED VMT ANALYSIS PROCESS

# VMT Estimation

- Project that do not meet any of the screening criteria are subject to VMT analysis
- Main tool for estimating VMT for projects in San Leandro is the Alameda County Transportation Commission Travel Demand Model







# Other Transportation Analyses

- In addition to VMT, projects are required to evaluate the following in CEQA documents:
  - Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
  - 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.
- Outside of the CEQA process, projects generating more than 100 net new peak hour vehicle trips required to prepare a Local Transportation Impact Analysis to address traffic operations, parking, and access and circulation for various travel modes.