



**TITLE: TRAFFIC IMPACT POLICY**

**POLICY NUMBER: 1-05**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: 12/07/16**

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**ENABLING ACTIONS: 1991-174; 2014-017; 2016-068**

**REVISED DATES: 8/5/91; 3/24/14; 12/6/16**

**APPROVED:** 

**I. DEFINITIONS**

*Average Daily Trips.* Average Daily Trips (ADT) are the total number of trips, both in-bound and out-bound, within a 24 hour weekday period, generated by a particular use or development.

*Pass-By Trip.* Trips generated by the proposed Project that would be attracted from traffic passing the proposed project site on an adjacent street that contains direct access to the Project.

*Peak Hour Trip.* Peak Hour Trips are vehicle trips, both in-bound and out-bound, occurring during a one hour period either during the A.M. Peak (7 A.M. to 9 A.M.) or the P.M. Peak (4 P.M. to 6 P.M.), generated by a particular use or Project.

*Project.* A Project subject to this policy encompasses all land use development projects affecting the built environment, including changes in occupancy or intensification of existing uses, over which the Town has administrative or legislative authority, that require review and approval and issuance of a building permit, certificate of use or occupancy, or other land use approval by Town staff, Commissions, or Council.

*Specialty Retail.* Specialty Retail uses are defined as walk-in and impulse businesses such as juice bars, yogurt shops, coffee shops, donut shops, and similar uses which do not generally serve meals and have limited or no seating. Specialty Retail uses are defined under this policy for purposes of establishing trip generation data and this definition does not provide any land use or zoning guidance.

## II. GENERAL CONDITIONS AND APPLICABILITY

1. This policy is intended to provide guidance to Town staff and the development community in implementing the provisions of the Town Municipal Code, Chapter 15, Article VII, Traffic Impact Mitigation Fees.
2. Projects that are determined by the Town to generate one or more new net Average Daily Trips are subject to this policy.
3. Projects that will generate 20 or more new Peak Hour Trips shall be required to complete a comprehensive traffic impact analysis report as described in more detail in Section VI, TRAFFIC IMPACT MITIGATION REPORT.
4. Consistent with Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) Guidelines adopted by the Santa Clara County Transportation Authority (VTA) Congestion Management Program, Pass-by Trips shall not be considered in calculating the 20 new Peak Hour Trip threshold that triggers the requirement for conducting a comprehensive traffic impact analysis report.
5. In order to determine how much new traffic a Project will generate, the Town will use applicable trip generation rates and pass-by trip data from the most recent edition of the Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE) *Trip Generation Manual*. Alternatively, trip generation rates from the following resources may be used if determined by the Town to be more appropriate than the available ITE rates: San Diego Association of Governments (SanDAG); California Department of Transportation (Caltrans); or the City of San Jose. A Town-sponsored or peer-reviewed traffic study may also be used to determine trip generation rates.
6. Nothing in this Policy shall prohibit or restrict a Project applicant from completing a traffic study for a Project anticipated to generate less than 20 new Peak Hour trips.

## III. TRAFFIC IMPACT MITIGATION FEES

1. All Projects that generate one or more new Average Daily Trips are required to pay Traffic Impact Mitigation Fees.
2. All required Traffic Impact Mitigation Fees shall be paid in full to the Town in association with and prior to issuance of a building permit. If no building permit is required, the fee shall be paid in full prior to issuance of a certificate of use and occupancy, or similar entitlement. The amount due shall be calculated based on the fee in place as approved by the Town Council by resolution at the time the fee is paid.

3. The per trip amount of the fee shall be as set forth by the Town Council by resolution, pursuant to Town Municipal Code, Chapter 15, Article VII, Traffic Impact Mitigation Fees.
4. Fees shall be calculated by multiplying net new ADT by the per trip amount in place at the time the fees are paid.
5. ADT shall be determined by using the applicable trip generation rate and pass-by trip data from the most recent edition of the Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE) *Trip Generation Manual*. When a use is not listed in the ITE *Trip Generation Manual*, or where ADT data is not available, the Town Traffic Engineer shall use available Peak Hour Trip data or select the most appropriate trip generation rate and pass-by trip classification for use in calculating ADT. Trip generation rates from alternate sources may be used if determined by the Town Traffic Engineer to be more appropriate than the available ITE rates. Examples of alternate sources of data include: San Diego Association of Governments (SanDAG); California Department of Transportation (Caltrans); City of San Jose; comparable store/business traffic studies.

#### **IV. CREDIT FOR EXISTING TRIPS**

1. In calculating new Peak Hour Trips for purposes of determining whether or not a traffic impact analysis report is required pursuant to this Policy, trip credit shall be granted for an existing use or the most recent former use within the past five years prior to submittal of a Project application.
2. In calculating new Average Daily Trips for purposes of determining the amount of the Traffic Impact Mitigation Fee due, trip credit shall be granted for an existing use or the most recent former use within the past five years prior to submission of a Project application.
3. Where the property is vacant, the most recent former use within the past five years prior to submission of a Project application shall be used. If the property has been vacant for more than five years, no credit shall be given. Vacancy for purposes of Fee Credit shall include any vacant or unoccupied property, structure or building where no active, approved use is currently present.
4. Where a portion of the space is changing use, credit will apply to the proportionate square footage of the space under review.
5. Where the change in use results in fewer trips than the existing or former use, no credit or refund will be due the applicant.

**V. CREDIT FOR TRAFFIC MITIGATION IMPROVEMENTS**

1. Credit against Traffic Impact Mitigation Fees due shall be granted up to the amount of the Estimated Project Cost shown on Attachment 1, Town of Los Gatos Traffic Mitigation Improvements Project List, for any listed projects for which the developer, as a condition of approval, is required to either construct at the developer's sole cost, or contribute a fixed or percentage amount of funding toward future construction of the listed improvement. Where construction is fully funded and completed by the developer, said credit shall be equal to the Project Cost as shown in Attachment 1. Where payment is a fixed amount or a percentage of Project Cost, credit shall be equal to the actual amount due, whether the project is constructed by the developer or others.
2. No credit shall be given for any public right-of-way dedication required for completion of projects listed on Attachment 1.
3. Credit will be given on a case-by-case basis and shall not exceed the impact fee payable. Any request for credit shall be made prior to the payment of the Traffic Impact Mitigation Fees. No credit shall be given for installation of Town-standard frontage improvements, Project access improvements, or internal circulation improvements.
4. Credit shall only be granted for payment of costs or construction of projects listed in Attachment 1, unless otherwise approved by the Town Council.

**VI. TRAFFIC IMPACT ANALYSIS**

1. Traffic impact analysis reports required pursuant to this policy shall be prepared consistent with the Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) Guidelines adopted by the Santa Clara County Transportation Authority (VTA) Congestion Management Program (August 2009), or as such Guidelines may be amended or updated from time to time, except that the threshold for preparation of a traffic report under this policy is 20 new Peak Hour trips, whereas the VTA TIA threshold is 100 new Peak Hour Trips.
2. Traffic impact analysis reports shall be funded in full by the project applicant. Project applicants shall deposit funds with the Town in an amount deemed necessary to cover the cost of an independent consultant report, plus staff administrative and review costs. Following deposit of funds, the Town will hire a professional transportation consultant to complete the required study. Alternatively, the project applicant may hire their own professional engineering or transportation consultant to complete a traffic study, in which case they must deposit with the Town funds sufficient for the Town to hire a professional

firm to conduct a peer review of the applicant-prepared traffic report, plus staff administrative and review costs.

3. The Town shall conduct an open, competitive process to establish a list of firms which are qualified to prepare traffic reports and/or conduct peer review of traffic studies under contract to the Town. The list of firms shall be selected in accordance with the Town Purchasing Policy. A new list shall be created at a minimum of once every five years.

## VII. OTHER PROVISIONS

1. The Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE) *Trip Generation Manual* trip generation rates for Specialty Retail Center shall apply to all Specialty Retail uses as defined in this policy.
2. A secondary dwelling unit shall be exempt from this policy.
3. The Town Council may exempt housing developments for very low, low and moderate income residents (as defined by Town Ordinance, General Plan, or statute) from all or a portion of the traffic impact mitigation fee upon making a finding that the development provides a significant community benefit by meeting current needs for affordable housing.
4. Uses within the Central Business District (C-2 Zone) are expected to change periodically as part of the natural business cycle. For the purpose of Traffic Impact Fees, changes in use without changes in net building square footage within the C-2 Zone shall not be considered to create a traffic impact, shall be exempt from this policy, and no fees shall be charged for a change in use. Any increases in building square footage shall pay impact fees at the ITE Shopping Center rate or comparable equivalent rate for the expanded area, as determined by the Town Traffic Engineer.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Robert Schultz, Town Attorney