



Interconnected, Accessible City  
*Transportation Analysis in San José*  
*Shift to Vehicle Miles Traveled*

June 29, 2017  
Roosevelt Community Center



# Purposes of Meeting

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- Explain State law
  - What are the changes?
  - How will the City of San José approach these changes?
- Gather your feedback
  - As City staff works to craft a policy to address change in State law and implement the General Plan, what is important to consider from your perspective?

# Meeting Flow

1. Explain State Law changes & City of San José draft approach
2. Q&A
3. Small group feedback

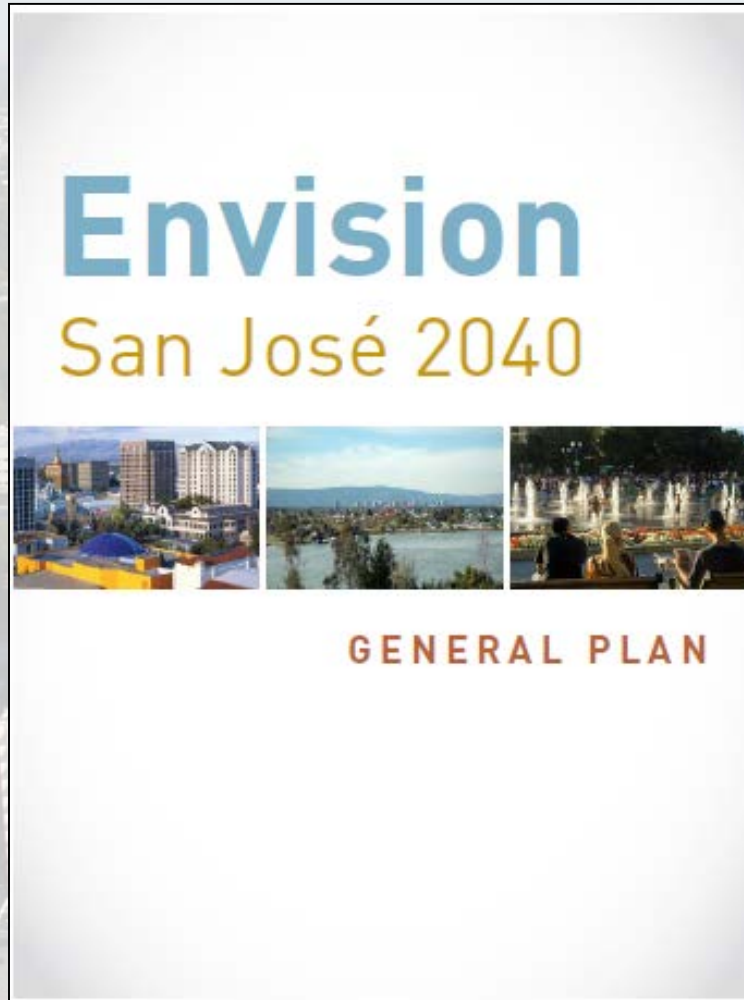
# State Direction – Senate Bill 743 (Steinberg)

- Promotes infill development near transit
- Requires jurisdictions to stop using auto delay (measured by Level of Service) in transportation analysis under the California Environmental Quality Act
- Focuses on regional level impacts
- State Office of Planning and Research Draft Guidelines recommends using Vehicle Miles Traveled in transportation analysis under CEQA

# State's Goals

Reduce	Greenhouse Gas Emissions
Reduce	traffic-related air pollution
Promote	biking, walking, transit
Promote	development near transit
Provide	clean, efficient access to destinations

# City of San José Goals



## Environmental Leadership

- Air Pollutant Emission Reduction
- Greenhouse Gas Reduction

## Balanced Transportation Networks

- Vision Zero – Improving Safety
- Complete Streets – Streetscapes for People
- Transportation Management

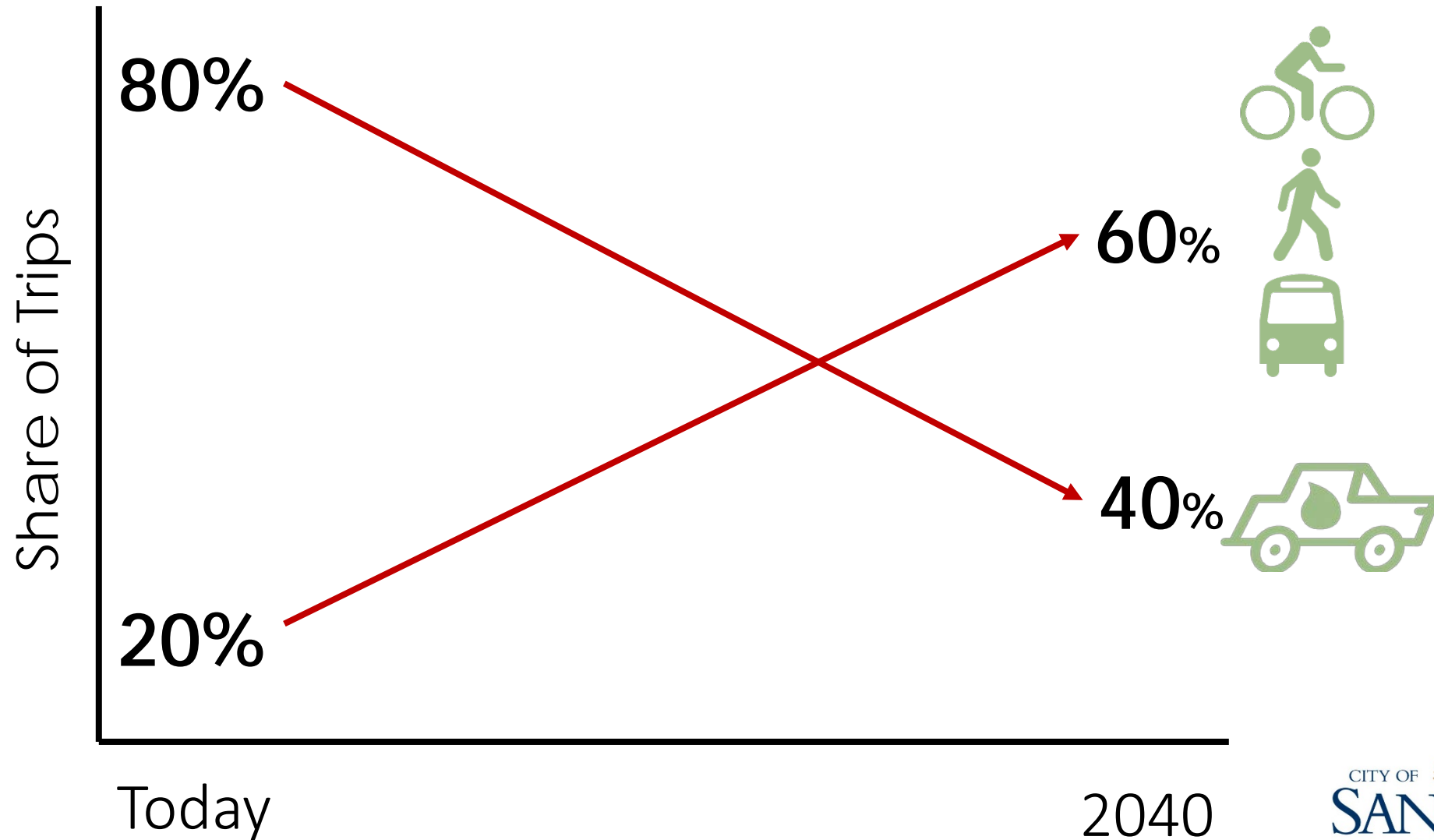
## Interconnected City

- Integrated Land Use Patterns
- Connections

## Focused Growth

- Downtown, Urban Villages & Employment Priority Areas
- Not in most of the City

# Interconnected and Accessible City



# What is Level of Service (LOS)?

- Measures car congestion at signalized intersections
- Intersections are assigned an A – F rating depending on how long vehicles are delayed at an intersection.
- Does not measure a location's vibrancy, walkability, bikeability, etc.



# What's important depends upon perspective



Traffic engineer:

**F**

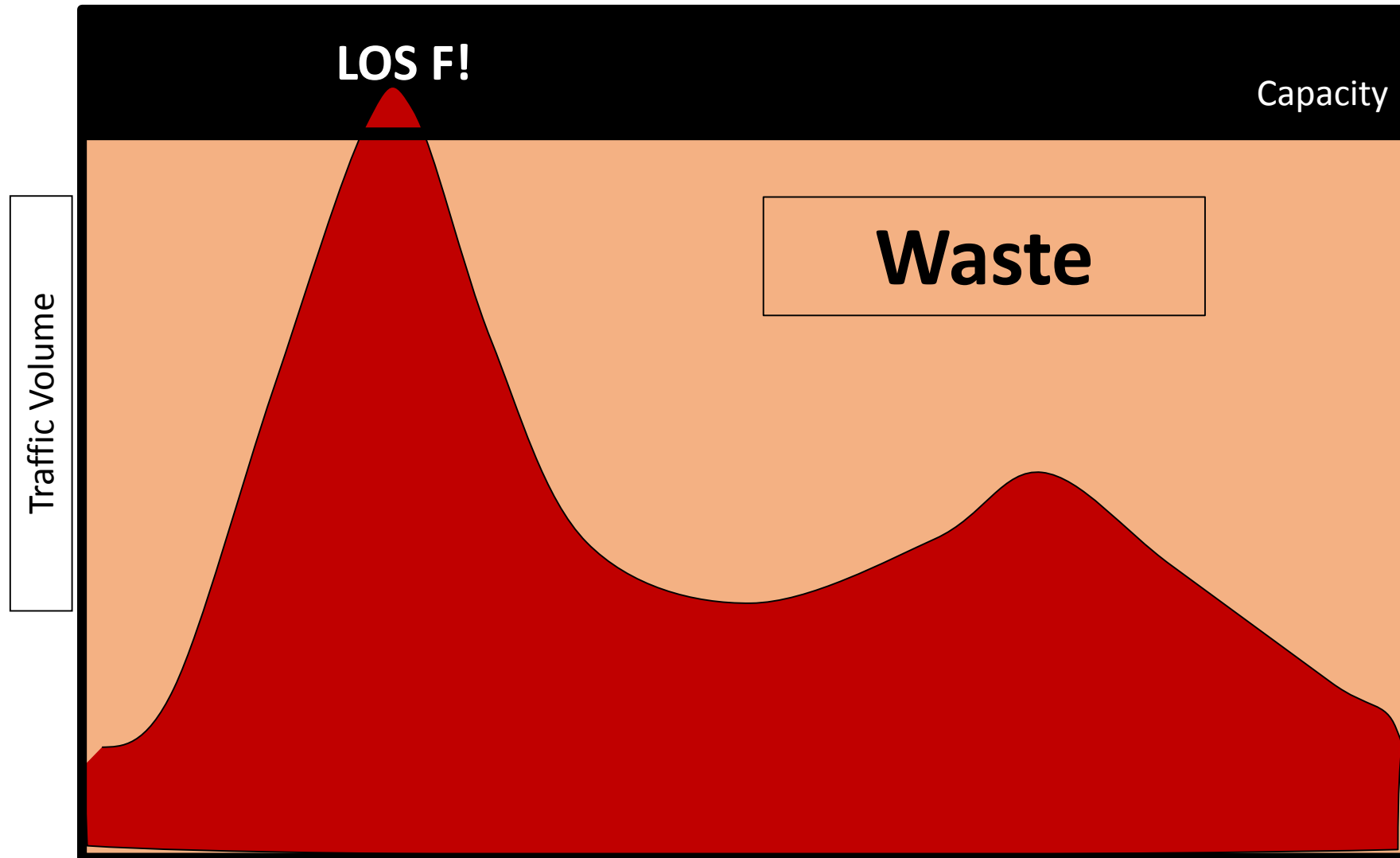
**A**

Economist:

**A**

**F**

# Traffic Economics



# Level of Service – What it Means Under CEQA

Transportation

Safety

/bicycle/pedestrian  
projects = Potential  
“Environmental Impact”



Road Widening =  
No “Environmental  
Impact”

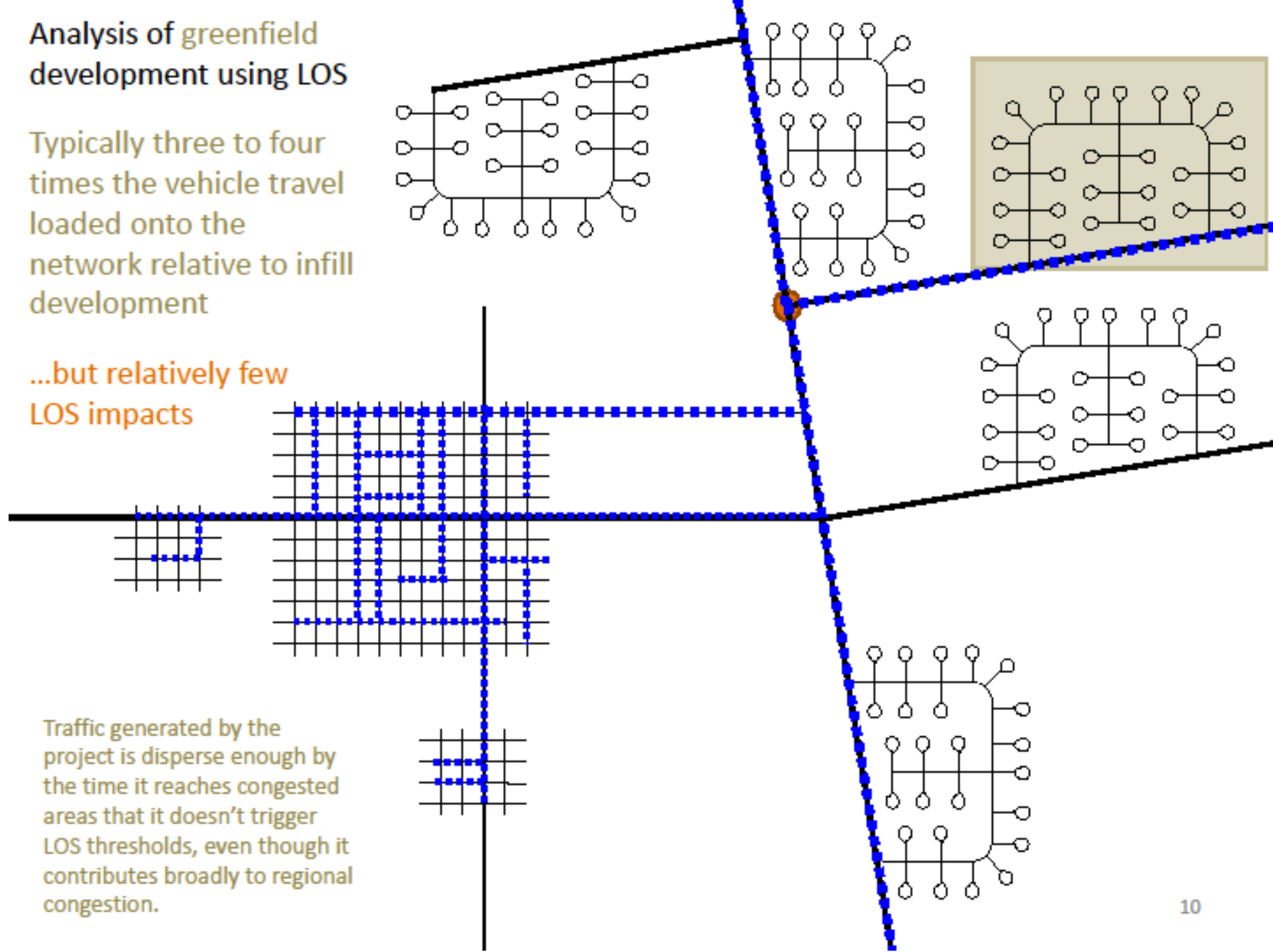


## Analysis of greenfield development using LOS

Typically three to four times the vehicle travel loaded onto the network relative to infill development

...but relatively few LOS impacts

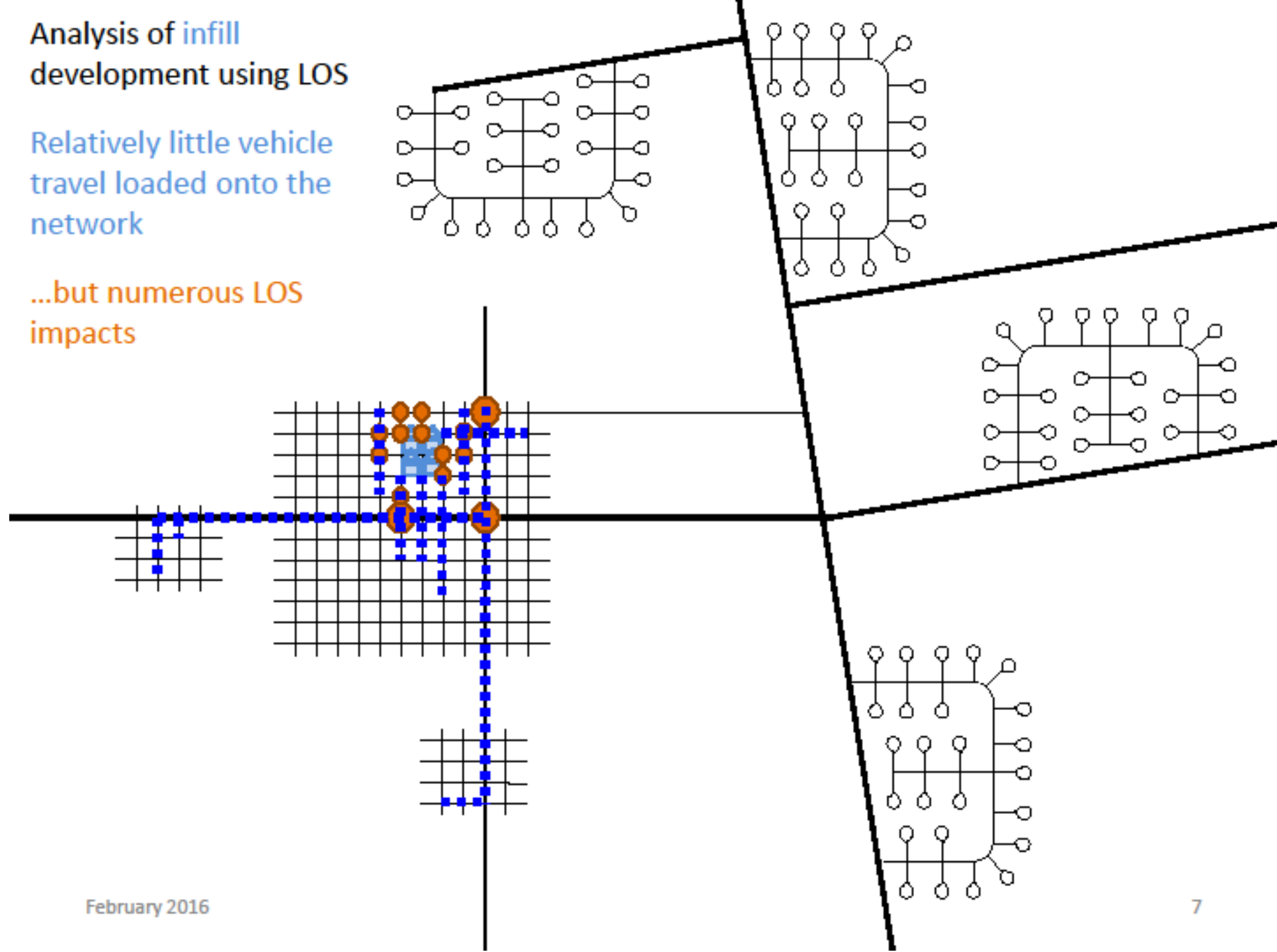
Traffic generated by the project is disperse enough by the time it reaches congested areas that it doesn't trigger LOS thresholds, even though it contributes broadly to regional congestion.



Analysis of infill  
development using LOS

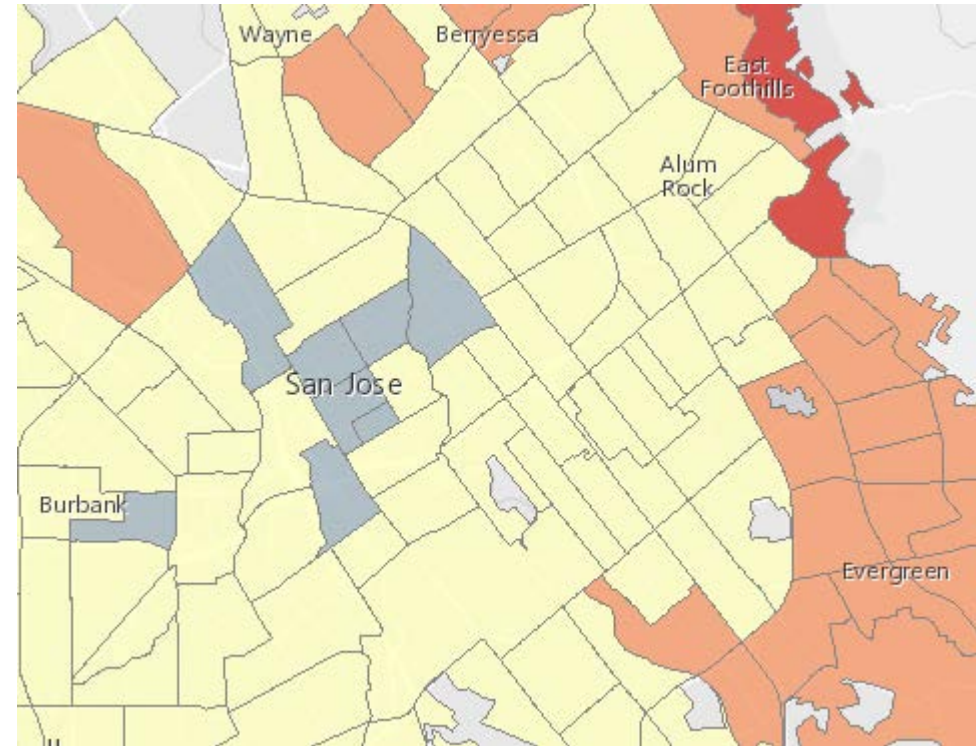
Relatively little vehicle  
travel loaded onto the  
network

...but numerous LOS  
impacts

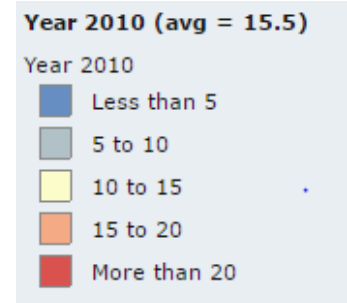


# What is Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)?

- Measure of how far people will typically travel by vehicle
- Low VMT projects & areas:
  - People don't have to travel by car as much or as far to get what they need
- High VMT projects & areas:
  - People have to go far to get what they need
  - People have few viable options other than to drive



Source: MTC, 2014.



# How does VMT line up with goals?

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## Environmental Leadership

- New developments will need to reduce VMT and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

## Balanced Transportation Networks

- Streamline environmental process for transportation projects that reduce VMT like bike lanes, transit stops, crosswalks.
- Safety, traffic calming projects, operations

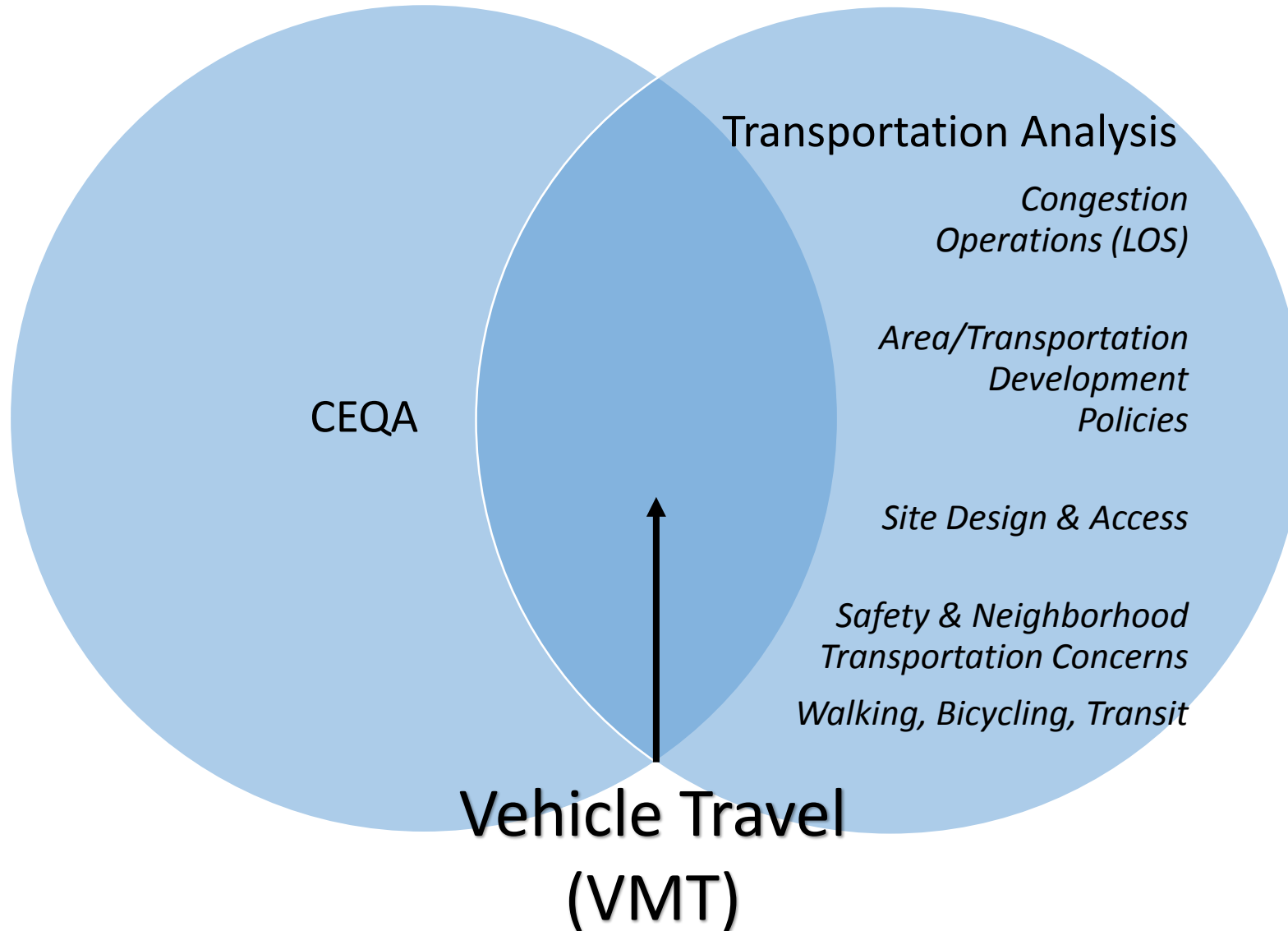
## Interconnected City

- Incentivize developments with good access to transit, retail and services.

## Focused Growth

- Streamline environmental process for developments near transit, retail, employment where there is a choice not to drive.
- Generally avoiding changes to existing neighborhoods.

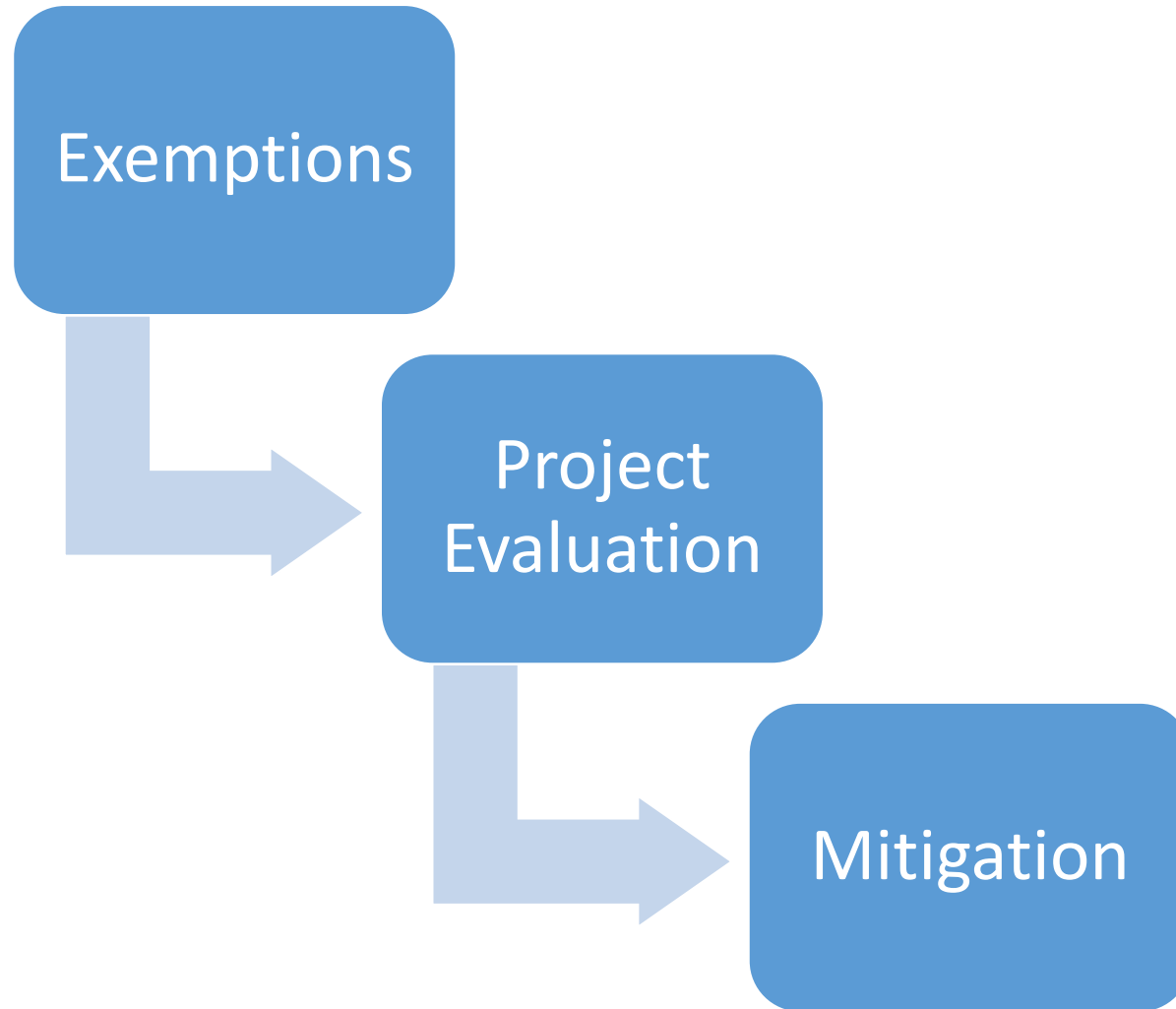
# CEQA & Transportation Analysis



Phase I  
Draft  
Proposal



# CEQA Impact per VMT – *Draft Proposal*



# CEQA Impact per VMT – *Draft Proposal*

## Exemptions

- Small Infill Projects
- In Low VMT Planned Growth Areas AND with High-Quality Transit AND Transit-Supportive
- Local-serving Retail
- Transportation Projects that reduce or don't impact VMT

# Small Infill Projects

- 15 single family homes
- 25 multifamily homes
- 30,000 square feet industrial
- 10,000 square feet office
- 5,000 square feet retail



# Low VMT Areas + Planned Growth Areas + High Quality Transit + Transit-Supportive



# Local-serving Retail



Cottle Transit Village, Ken Kay Associates



Transportation Projects that reduce or have  
no VMT Impact

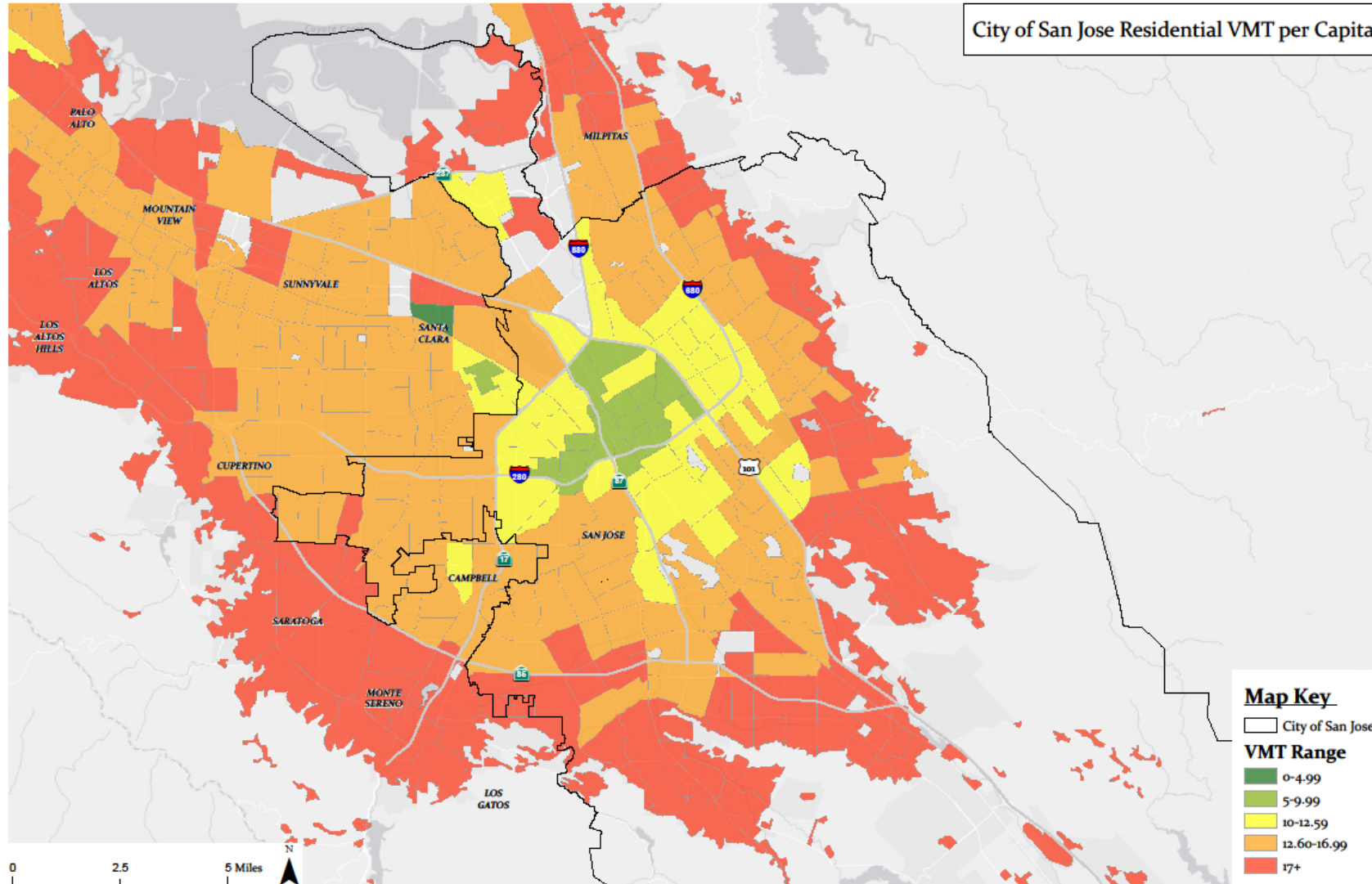
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# CEQA Impact per VMT – *Draft Proposal*

## Project Evaluation & Mitigation

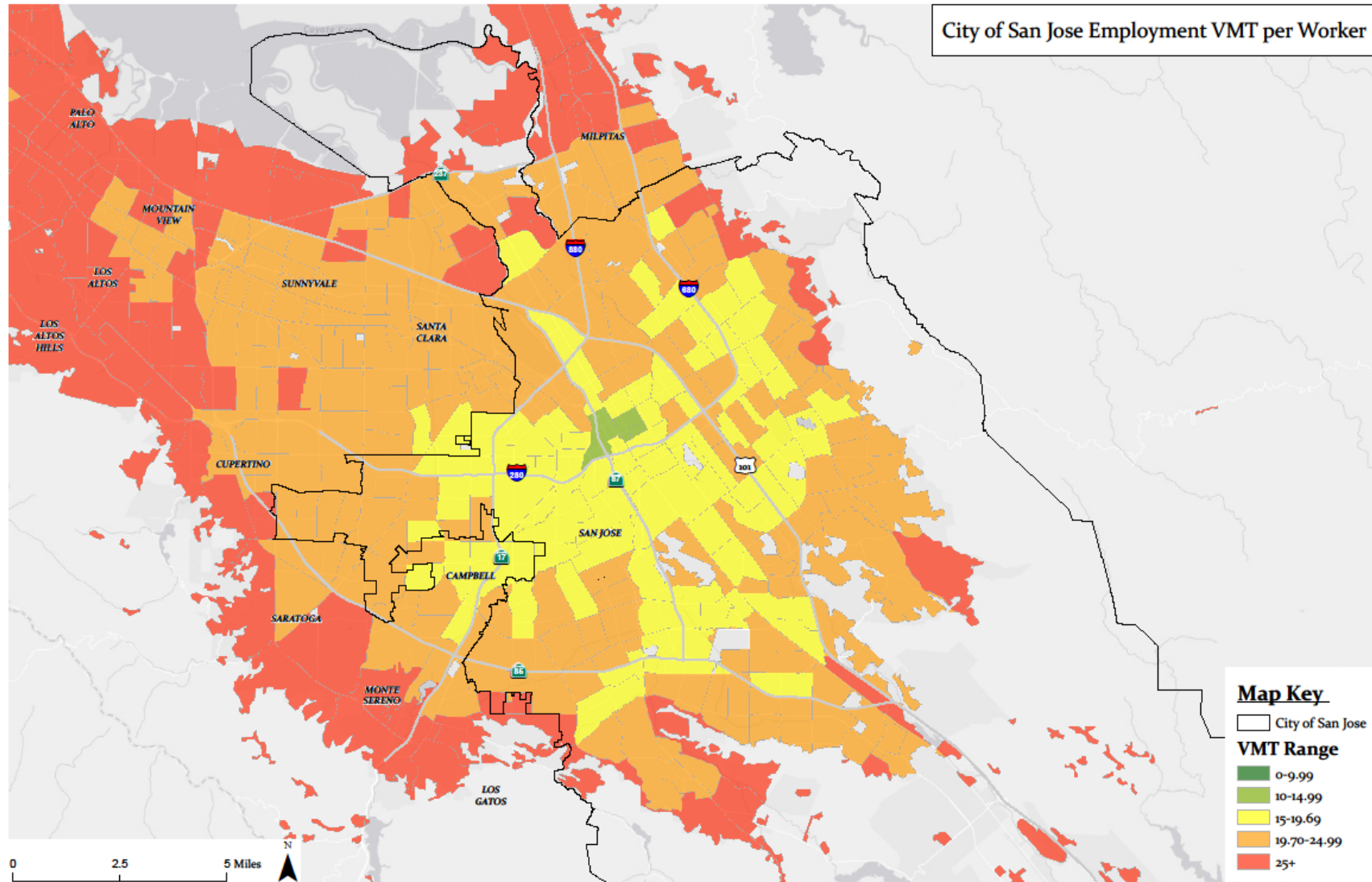
- Threshold of Significance: In line with State Guidance (generally 15% below baseline per capita VMT)

# CEQA – VMT thresholds - Residential





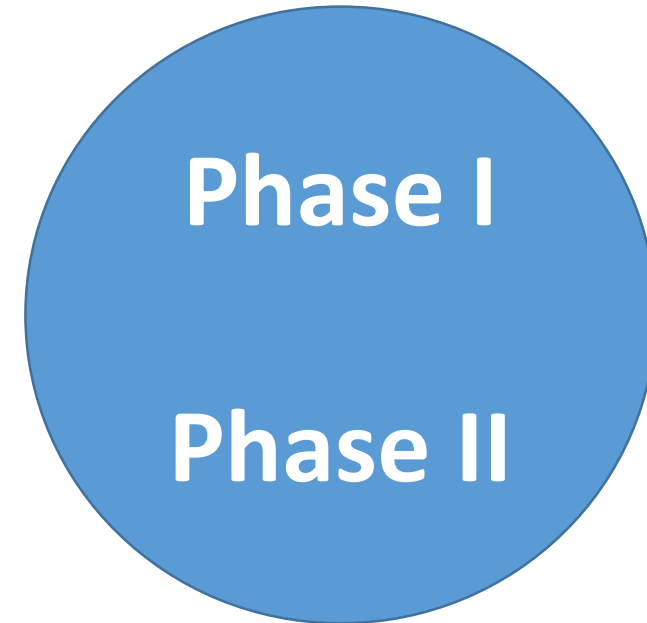
# CEQA – VMT thresholds - Employment



# How will it work?

## *Transportation Analysis Update Draft Proposal*

- Streamline transportation analysis for projects that align with General Plan
- Begin by changing our measure of “environmental impact” under CEQA, per SB 743
- Update other transportation metrics and investment as a second phase



# Schedule



# Questions?

For more information, contact

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