

high-density projects filled with luxury condominiums and apartments. These projects are quickly being approved while we see no affordable housing for local hardworking employees, schoolteachers, young professionals, technicians, and new families. We need more attention to allowing density only when it fulfills such key goals as architectural excellence, workforce housing, and urban place-making.

Our tree canopy and green spaces are some of the most important parts of our city, and what makes Pasadena so special. Throughout the last several years, however, protected trees have been cut down tree after tree. Pasadena's streets will become unwelcoming concrete deserts if we continue to cut down our urban forest at such a rapid rate.

City leadership appears to have lost sight of what makes our city livable. They are not focused on the effects decisions have on the city as a whole. Instead, the focus for our city leaders seem to be on appeasing developers and generating city income regardless of the long term consequences. Pasadena is facing many issues: traffic, crime, homelessness, loss of green space, and over-development. Our city needs to work for everyone – not just those who push a single agenda the loudest. Decisions need to be made that work for all of Pasadena, with the goal to help Pasadena grow in a balanced way that cares for all of its citizens.

Livable Pasadena is about protecting the small town feel, great neighborhoods, historical architecture, trees and natural setting for all residents. We believe it is time for the residents to take control again. It's time to hold our elected and appointed leaders accountable to the vision incorporated in the General Plan. We need to find our anchor in the vision of our city, and work diligently to achieve this for all Pasadena residents. It is doable. We need our city leaders to protect our city and to guide our growth. It is time to refocus on our General Plan and keep Pasadena livable.

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M A D I S O N H E I G H T S



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CITY CLERK  
CITY OF PASADENA

2020 JAN 10 AM 7:35

RECEIVED

January 6, 2019

**Mayor Tornek, City Council, and Planning Department**

Pasadena City Hall  
100 N. Garfield Ave  
Pasadena, CA 91101

**RE: PRISM Engineering's "Traffic Engineering Review" of 253 South Los Robles Project and Related Traffic Issues**

Dear Mayor, City Council, and Planning Department,

The Board of Directors of Madison Heights Neighborhood Association (MHNA) respectfully submits a traffic engineering report prepared by registered CA Traffic Engineer, Grant P. Johnson, TE, for your review. This traffic engineering report raises several questions and provides information you should consider while deciding to approve the CEQA exemption for 253 South Los Robles. In summary, the traffic engineering review of 253 South Los Robles identifies the following deficiencies and concerns, which are further explained in detail in the report (see attached report):

1. Level of Service (LOS) is not dead as an analysis tool. The vast majority of cities and counties, and even Caltrans, still use LOS of traffic operations as a required metric to determine the quality and efficiency of a transportation system, regardless of CEQA requirements.
2. Nearly ALL cities and counties have strict traffic study guidelines that require assessment of intersection LOS conditions, and to address all needed mitigations for vehicles, bikes, pedestrians, and transit to operate at an acceptable LOS. This requires use of the latest calculation methods.
3. The City traffic study guidelines state that HCM methods are to be used for LOS calculations, but the DOT traffic study uses an outdated intersection LOS calculation method, based on non-Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) methods from more than 20 years ago.
4. The City does not use HCM 2000 methods or even HCM 2010 methods in calculating the LOS, and the results differ from driver experience, are inaccurate and outdated.
5. Mitigations recommended by City staff to require new bike racks is good to encourage riding of bikes, but these kinds of improvements do not address the impact from the anticipated vehicle traffic, still not mitigated. Ignoring the Net New Trips that cumulatively increase traffic is a mistake because safety can be compromised. When traffic conditions worsen, drivers take more chances in aggravated delays, and safety can be compromised. Accidents may increase.
6. Safety IS covered in the CEQA EIR process as an official impact, to be addressed in the EIR.
7. There needs to be a safety assessment of the traffic increases. Accident history can reveal safety issues that would be aggravated by increases in traffic, and accident history must be addressed. (Have fatalities increased as of late? etc.).

01/13/2020

Item 9



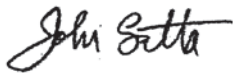
8. The City of Pasadena should be looking at safety in the EIR process, as well as the traffic study process.
9. The California Governor's Office of Planning and Research reveals that lower speeds of vehicles on roads results in dramatically fewer pedestrian fatalities (5% risk at 20 mph vs 100% risk at 50 mph). This level of safety detail is not covered in the City's traffic study (which focused on intersection LOS using an older method).
10. The City's Traffic Reduction and Transportation Impact Fee (TR/TIF) identifies the priority purchase of \$98,872,426 worth of new buses (about 200 new buses) all paid for 100% by the TIF fee. However, there is no logical "nexus" as required by law, between the purchase of a bus, and the impact made by a project. In other words, how do additional buses mitigate new vehicle impacts?
11. The Mitigation Fee Act (Government Code Sections 66000-66025) AB 1600 requires that cities must show a reasonable relationship (nexus) between exacted mitigation funds for a project, and the said traffic impacts caused by new project.
12. The planned bus purchases represent 50% of the total capital improvement cost. A much lesser amount is allocated towards roadway improvements that could help mitigate traffic on the road.
13. Can the mitigation fees be better allocated to future real mitigation related to vehicles, peds and bike facilities? More directly related to the nexus of specific project(s) impact?
14. The City's traffic model has limited precision built into it. It is appropriate for the calculation of VMT totals for the City. However, it is not appropriate for specific project traffic assignment or the resulting intersection LOS analyses.
15. The City's traffic model does not have "parcel level" precision (as stated by former DOT Director), but only major block level precision, and is broad-brush in nature.
16. The 20 various driveways on the four block faces in the City's model containing the project (including S. Euclid Ave) are not represented in the model. The model generically represents these with a few aggregate driveways. The model could "choose" to assign all traffic through only one of these block face connectors. The intersection turning movement precision is not there.
17. Manual assignments of project traffic, by a traffic engineer, should be performed in traffic studies so that trip distribution and project impacts can be properly analyzed based on real world conditions, using engineering judgment of what is possible/reasonable in each project's case.
18. There are now long lines of congested traffic going northbound on S. Los Robles past the project site in the morning.
19. It is not reasonable that the project traffic could turn left in the peak hour as shown in the City's traffic study since there will not be a gap in the stop and go traffic. The project traffic is much more likely to turn right to go south out S. Los Robles and find another way to various destinations.

MHNA believes there is oversight on the City's behalf for not recognizing the need for a cumulative traffic report to study the increase in vehicle trips generated by several projects within the Los Robles corridor, instead opting to consider each project's newly generated vehicle trips separately. We have found with the additional information discovered in this new traffic engineering review that even the technical methods used in the City's traffic study procedures raise serious concerns in the validity of the study results. MHNA questions the existing volume for Los Robles and Del Mar and the lack of a vehicle cap creating a threshold of what the streets can withstand. MHNA believes the combination of all these future projects will in fact add significant impact to our neighborhood connector street of Los Robles and

therefore should trigger a stronger and more thorough investigation by DOT, such as an independent traffic study prepared according to standard best practices, and using engineering judgment in evaluation of a project's future impacts to the local street system. Lastly, 253 South Los Robles cannot be found to be exempt from CEQA because safety issues have not been studied or addressed. The high levels of traffic congestion mixing with pedestrians and bikes combined with road design issues must be evaluated. An EIR would look at all these issues specifically and the traffic study portion in the EIR would go beyond the VMT air quality component.

As our bylaws state, it is our duty as a board to oversee city government when Madison Heights and adjacent neighborhoods are threatened by civic planning decisions, including excessive development.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Latta".

John Latta  
President, MHNA



# TRAFFIC ENGINEERING REVIEW

253 SOUTH LOS ROBLES PROJECT AND RELATED TRAFFIC ISSUES

CITY OF PASADENA, CA

PREPARED FOR:

MADISON HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION, MHNA

656 S. ARROYO PARKWAY, SUITE 199

PASADENA, CA 91105

January 8, 2020

Prepared by:



*This review has been  
prepared and certified  
by Grant P. Johnson, TE,  
Principal. Lic #1453*



This report addresses several traffic engineering related issues surrounding the proposed project called 253 S. Los Robles, in the City of Pasadena. The following four items are addressed in this review:

- I. *Is Level of Service (LOS) Dead as an Analysis Tool?*
- II. *Mitigation Requirements as per The Traffic Reduction and Transportation Impact Fee (TR/TIF)*
- III. *Use of Traffic Model to Determine VMT and Traffic Impacts*
- IV. *253 S. Los Robles Project, Specific Traffic Study Issues*

## **I. Is Level of Service (LOS) Dead as an Analysis Tool?**

This has been a confusing topic throughout California. The answer is, no, it has not been eliminated, and is still a superior analysis tool to determine the Level of Service (LOS) for all modes of traffic including vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles, at an intersection or along a roadway section. The software to determine this LOS metric is sophisticated, highly developed, and reliable. The vast majority of cities and counties, and even Caltrans, still use LOS as a required metric to determine the quality and efficiency of a transportation system. As a general rule, drivers react to excessive delays to save time, make more risky lane changes, some run red lights to get through. These behaviors compromising safety to all users of a transportation system (including vehicles, bikes, and pedestrians) are a byproduct of an inefficient and delayed transportation system. Cities and counties are requiring development to mitigate their traffic impacts, in addition to what may be required in an EIR process. Nearly ALL cities and counties have a traffic study guidelines document that requires assessment of LOS conditions, and the traffic study report for development must address all needed mitigations for vehicles, bikes, pedestrians, and transit. All four areas are covered in these required reports.

People have come to identify over the decades with a ranking system from A to F to describe the amount of delay, F being the worst condition. Simply spoken, if at an intersection a motorist is delayed less than 10 seconds on the average, then LOS A conditions exist. If there is more than 80 seconds of delay on the average, then LOS F exists. It is really simple. These metrics were developed with much research by the Federal Government and Transportation Research Board, and have been adopted nationwide, and I can say, are even being used worldwide as a common metric. It is not outdated as a metric.

The confusion over LOS in California comes in when there is an EIR required. California legislation has determined that using LOS, or average delay (whether it be for a car, a bike, or a person), is no longer an acceptable metric in the environmental impact report process. The acceptable metrics to evaluate impacts include air quality, vehicle miles traveled (VMT), noise, safety, etc. These metrics used in the EIR process are more compatible with the prospect of getting hi-rise or high-density development approved in fully developed areas where traffic conditions are already at or exceeding capacity. This was really the reason to eliminate LOS as a metric in the EIR, because the LOS F conditions commonly calculated for a large project's traffic impacts could hardly ever be financially mitigated sufficiently to achieve a satisfactory LOS result. Mitigations were impossible using the LOS metric, so it was eliminated in order for more transit, walking, and biking, to be the mitigation instead.

But does this improve the traffic situation? This is a hotly debated topic, and the answer is generally, no, it does not eliminate LOS F conditions where they exist. In fact, ignoring traffic impacts in the EIR actually

makes things worse for traffic. When approvals are made for projects even when traffic conditions are unacceptable, the new project will add even more vehicles to the road, and the result is even worse traffic conditions. Typical ramifications of ignoring traffic impacts include longer lines of traffic waiting at intersections, drivers waiting through more signal cycles, and more intense turning movement conflicts at intersections involving vehicles, pedestrians and bikes. Light rail too can exacerbate conflicts of these turning movement conflicts at intersections.

The elimination of LOS and delay from an EIR does not mean that a city, a county, or even a state can eliminate the need to create and maintain an efficient transportation system. Why else would we still be using traffic signals in every city if efficiency was not important? Why not just use a Stop Sign instead? The answer is, it is important and cannot be ignored.

When a project is evaluated in the EIR process, the analysts will take a look at traffic numbers as a part of the overall process. But often in the EIR process, the "mitigations" being required as a result of traffic impacts are not related to the project itself. For instance, adding bike racks is a good mitigation, but it does not address the additional traffic from a new project that has Net New Trips. To ignore the net new trips is a mistake because there is a safety factor or component to all of this. When traffic conditions worsen, drivers take more chances, delays are aggravating the situation, and safety is compromised.

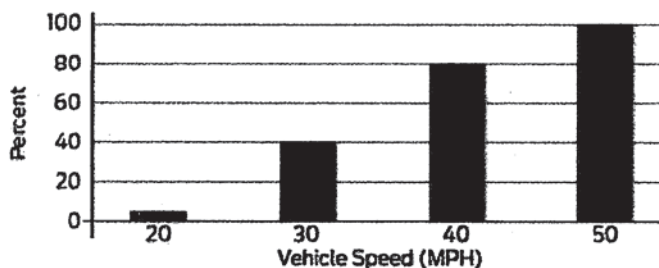
It is important to take a look at safety, because safety IS covered in the EIR process as an impact. However, the connection to traffic is not allowed as a default, in other words, there needs to be data or some history to show an unsafe condition (such as an increase in traffic accidents, or even the severity of the traffic accident. Have fatalities increased as of late? etc.). The City of Pasadena should be looking at safety in the EIR process.

From the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research comes the following chart:

**Reducing Speed and Increasing Driver Attention**

Vehicle speed plays a fundamental role in transportation safety. The NACTO Urban Street Design Guide, reports: "Vehicle speed plays a critical role in the cause and severity of crashes." The chart below shows increased pedestrian fatality risk associated with higher motor vehicle speeds.

**Risk of Pedestrian Fatality by Auto Speed**



Source: Federal Highway Administration

[http://opr.ca.gov/docs/OPR\\_Appendix\\_B\\_final.pdf](http://opr.ca.gov/docs/OPR_Appendix_B_final.pdf)

This chart indicates that lower speeds of vehicles results in less pedestrian fatalities. Pedestrians also play a part in improving safety by refraining from J-walking, or assuming that being in a cross walk even with a green light means you are safe. The same is true for drivers of vehicles who may think that a green light means they are safe to proceed. Looking both ways is safety practice for all modes of travel. As long as



Traffic Engineering Review: 253 S. Los Robles, Pasadena, CA

cities mix traffic modes (cars, bus, bikes, and pedestrians), there will be safety issues due to human behavior. An EIR needs to consider issues of safety, as a requirement. Separate traffic impact studies also need to look at safety even if an EIR is not required. In these studies, it is required to determine if local accident rates are increasing, if LOS is poor, or if there are some other transportation improvements that are needed. A commonsense engineering judgment approach is needed to prepare a traffic study where several aspects of transportation are considered, including design, safety, LOS, efficiency, signal operations, presence and adequacy of pedestrian and bike facilities, where bus stops should be installed, etc.

Measuring traffic conditions and level of service through software can show where problem locations are, and more often than not, an unacceptable LOS at an intersection is an indication of a potentially unsafe location (because of the driver aggression/competition, cyclist aggression/competition, and even pedestrian impatience trying to navigate through the delays. People take more chances under such conditions). Some drivers will push the limits to get through an intersection as the light turns red, and if high speeds are involved, safety is compromised for non-vehicular traffic.

## **II. Mitigation Requirements as per "The Traffic Reduction and Transportation Impact Fee" (TR/TIF)**

The City's current transportation impact fee program amended by the city on July 24, 2017, requires that new development pay for their net new traffic trips onto the road. So, if a project is a redevelopment project, the net new trips would be the proposed project vehicle trips minus the number of vehicle trips that would have taken place at the existing project site if the business or development were currently functioning. Typically, abandoned properties are redeveloped, and local traffic volumes have already adjusted due to the lack of traffic. So, when a new development comes online, even when their net new trips are low, the full impact of those projects is felt on the street system. The full trip generation of the project is realized by the drivers that already use those roadways. In my view, new/additional traffic from an infill redevelopment project can be as significant as when a brand-new vacant lot is developed, especially when a proposed infill lot has been vacant or abandoned for some time.

Within the document that describes the City's transportation impact fee program, there is an "Attachment A" table from this fee program as follows, which describes various capital improvement projects that are anticipated up until the build out of the City's general plan to the year 2035. What caught my eye in this summary table of facilities needed for future development, is the first line item in blue for a local transit improvement identified as the purchasing of new buses to support the general plan. \$99 million, or 50% of the total fees collected, have been allocated to the purchasing of new buses in this table, with 100% funding of these coming from the traffic impact fee program. Most traffic mitigation fee programs do not include purchases of buses, but are used instead for new signals, bike lanes, and other improvements to the physical transportation system, such as a bridge, new road, widened road, or better pedestrian facilities if the nexus can be shown. Part of this is because of California law, AB 1600, which stipulates how these mitigation fee programs are to be administered. The nexus between the purchase of about 200 new buses in the next 15 years, which will also create an impact to traffic (and may not run fully occupied most of the time), and the very real traffic impacts of a new project, seems to be dubious. Other fully built-out cities in California that I have researched, do not place the purchases of buses into their traffic impact mitigation fee program, presumably because the nexus just isn't there (for instance, how



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does a new bus mitigate in any way, the traffic impacts from new cars impacting the roads? It in fact adds to the traffic impact if drivers don't stop driving their cars in turn<sup>1</sup>).

Attachment A: List of Transportation Improvements Funded Through the Fee

FACILITIES NEEDS LIST COSTS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT					
Allocation	Category	Project Description	Preliminary Project Costs (Original Needs List)	% Available/Assigned Program	Fund Project Costs (Total for Fee Programs)
NEW DEVELOPMENT ONLY	Local Transit Improvements	New Buses to Support Growth Plus (not over 2000)	\$99,872,436	100.0%	\$99,872,436
NEW DEVELOPMENT ONLY	Local Transit Improvements	Feasibility Study for General Plus (not over 2000)	\$20,000,000	100.0%	\$20,000,000
NEW DEVELOPMENT ONLY	Complete Streets	Complete Streets Program FY 2014 - 2020 (7/20/14)	\$750,000	100.0%	\$750,000
NEW DEVELOPMENT ONLY	Complete Streets	Complete Streets Program - Pasadena Street from Hill Ave to Arroyo Parkway (7/20/14)	\$400,000	100.0%	\$400,000
NEW DEVELOPMENT ONLY	Complete Streets	Complete Streets Program FY 2014 - 2020 (7/20/14)	\$100,000	100.0%	\$100,000
NEW DEVELOPMENT ONLY	Complete Streets	Complete Streets Program - Lake Street between Railroad Dr. and Lancaster St. (7/20/14)	\$100,000	100.0%	\$100,000
NEW DEVELOPMENT ONLY	Complete Streets	Washington Road Diet	\$80,000	0.0%	\$74,887
NEW DEVELOPMENT ONLY	Complete Streets	Change Center Road Diet	\$2,000,000	0.0%	\$1,877,278
NEW AND EXISTING	Traffic Ops	Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Project - Phase II (7/20/14)	\$4,100,000	0.0%	\$3,840,456
NEW AND EXISTING	Traffic Ops	Design of Blocks of Intersecting Corridors for Traffic Signal (7/20/14)	\$2,400,000	0.0%	\$2,240,000
NEW AND EXISTING	Traffic Ops	Gold Line Phase 1 - Project Implementation (7/20/14)	\$2,400,000	0.0%	\$2,240,000
NEW AND EXISTING	Traffic Ops	Multimodal Corridor Improvements FY 2014 - 2020 (7/20/14)	\$4,000,000	0.0%	\$3,740,000
NEW AND EXISTING	Traffic Ops	Traffic Signal Indication System Improvements - Phase II (7/20/14)	\$274,000	0.0%	\$257,564
NEW AND EXISTING	Traffic Ops	Left Turn Signal Phasing at East Oaks Ave and Colorado Blvd	\$770,000	0.0%	\$723,310
NEW AND EXISTING	Traffic Ops	Left Turn Signal Phasing at East Oaks Ave and Colorado Blvd	\$140,000	0.0%	\$131,772
NEW AND EXISTING	Traffic Ops	Mobility Corridors - River Road Access System (7/20/14)	\$2,623,000	0.0%	\$2,469,394
NEW AND EXISTING	Traffic Ops	Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Enhanced Variable Message Signage - Phase II (7/20/14)	\$270,000	0.0%	\$254,778
NEW AND EXISTING	Traffic Ops	Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Enhanced Variable Message Signage - Phase III (7/20/14)	\$1,122,428	0.0%	\$1,058,072
NEW AND EXISTING	Traffic Ops	Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Enhanced Variable Message Signage - Phase III (7/20/14)	\$1,417,500	0.0%	\$1,340,533
NEW AND EXISTING	Traffic Ops	Variable Traffic Signal Head at One-Way Streets (7/20/14)	\$204,500	0.0%	\$193,067
NEW AND EXISTING	Traffic Ops	Implement Bus Signal Priority System on Pasadena Translators	\$1,447,100	0.0%	\$1,364,772
NEW AND EXISTING	Traffic Ops	Adaptive Traffic Control Network - Phase II	\$1,102,117	0.0%	\$1,037,415
NEW AND EXISTING	Traffic Ops	Traffic Signal - Ocean Grove Blvd. at San Gabriel Ave	\$200,000	0.0%	\$189,000
NEW AND EXISTING	Traffic Ops	Traffic Signal - Florence Dr. and Gerry Mader Villa Blvd	\$200,000	0.0%	\$189,000
NEW AND EXISTING	Traffic Ops	Redesign of Access Video Detection System	\$200,000	0.0%	\$189,000
NEW AND EXISTING	Traffic Ops	Traffic Signal Improvements at Oakfield Ave and Washington Blvd	\$200,000	0.0%	\$189,000
NEW AND EXISTING	Traffic Ops	Activated Traffic Signal Upgrade (CRP)	\$400,000	0.0%	\$378,000
NEW AND EXISTING	Sign Plan	Passive Device Program	\$1,400,000	0.0%	\$1,322,000
NEW AND EXISTING	Pedestrian Improvements	Walk Sign Campaign for Old Pasadena	\$27,500,000	0.0%	\$25,925,000
NEW AND EXISTING	Pedestrian Improvements	Walk Sign Campaign for Pasadena District	\$3,000,000	0.0%	\$2,850,000
NEW AND EXISTING	Pedestrian Improvements	ADA Signage Improvements	\$27,000,000	0.0%	\$25,575,000
<b>Total Transportation Improvement Project Cost</b>			<b>\$189,820,796</b>		<b>\$177,482,554</b>

What also is interesting in this table is the 8.6% funding for all other projects (shown in green) from the mitigation fee, without an explanation of where the remaining 91.4% of the project cost will come from, or whether it is even feasible.

**Development Impact Fees in California: THE LAW**

The Mitigation Fee Act (Government Code Sections 66000-66025) came from Assembly Bill 1600. This law requires that a city must show a reasonable relationship (nexus) between exacted mitigation funds for a project, and the said traffic impacts caused by new project. In other words, if a project impacts an intersection and it operates at a poor level of service as a result, a city should require mitigation of said project in the form of a traffic improvement fee. The following is required of the city:

- I. Identify the purpose of the fee;
- II. Identify the use to which the fee is to be put;
- III. Determine how there is a reasonable relationship between the need for the public facility and the type of development project on which the fee is imposed;
- IV. Determine how there is a reasonable relationship between the amount of the fee and the cost of the public facility or portion of the public facility attributable to the development on which the fee is imposed.

<sup>1</sup> \*\*source: <https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop08054/sect4.htm>



Traffic Engineering Review: 253 S. Los Robles, Pasadena, CA

If the government doesn't make adequate findings connecting the fee and the impact, the fee may be subject to challenge as an illegal, non-voter-approved "special tax".

Transit Subsidies in the United States, the most common form of taxation for transit is the SALES TAX. In states as ideologically diverse as California, Texas, and Washington, statewide sales taxes provide the lion's share of transit subsidies. But in California, transit use is way down in recent years. Rather than a shift towards riding buses, the exact opposite is happening. Services such as Uber, riding bikes, even walking, etc., are making an impact on need for buses.

The following report on transit use comes from Transit California:

### Falling Transit Ridership

#### New Report from UCLA ITS Scholars Investigates Factors

Many California communities are banking on more transit use to address problems of congestion and climate change. Yet despite heavy investments in public transportation over the past 15 years, transit ridership is declining — from 2012 to 2016, California lost 62.2 million annual transit rides, and the six-county Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) region lost 72 million annual rides, 120 percent of the state's total losses.

source: <https://caltransit.org/news-publications/publications/transit-california/transit-california-archives/2018-editions/february/falling-transit-ridership/>

## III. Use of Traffic Model to Determine VMT, Traffic Impacts

The City of Pasadena has a TRANSPORTATION IMPACT ANALYSIS TIA CURRENT PRACTICE & GUIDELINES CP&G document that defines the process of analysis for new projects.



Table 3 (right) shows, that for non-CEQA traffic study situations, there are four (4) areas of analysis that need to be covered in the traffic study. This includes item #2 which address "Auto Level of Service" based on the industry standard Highway Capacity Manual (HCM).

Table 3- Metrics' Cap Outside of CEQA

METRIC	DESCRIPTION	CAP
1. Street Segment Analysis	The street segment analysis assesses traffic intrusion on local streets in residential neighborhoods	Increases of 10-15% above existing on streets with more than 1500 ADT would trigger conditions of approval to reduce project vehicular trips
2. Auto Level of Service	Level of Service (LOS) as defined by the Transportation Research Board's <i>Highway Capacity Manual (HCM)</i> .	A decrease beyond LOS D Citywide or LOS E within Transit Oriented Districts (TODs) would trigger conditions of approval to reduce project vehicular trips
3. PEQI	Pedestrian Environmental Quality Index	Below average Conditions
4. BEQI	Bicycle Environmental Quality Index	Below average conditions

source of Table 3: Pasadena DOT

<https://ww5.cityofpasadena.net/transportation/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2015/12/Current-Practice-and-Guidelines.pdf>



Traffic Engineering Review: 253 S. Los Robles, Pasadena, CA

### **VMT vs LOS. Is LOS Dead?**

LOS is not dead. Even Pasadena still uses LOS as a metric (for non-CEQA analysis, which happens to be most analyses). Even though Pasadena's methods for calculating LOS at intersections is outdated, based on older Intersection Capacity Utilization (ICU) methodology, DOT still calculates LOS at intersections that might be impacted by a project. It is a requirement of the City's TRANSPORTATION IMPACT ANALYSIS CURRENT PRACTICE & GUIDELINES document. However, LOS is dead in a strict CEQA context. In other words, by new law in California, CEQA transportation assessment is limited to VMT only, and LOS or vehicle delay is no longer considered an "environmental impact." Driving more or less miles is considered to have a direct impact on air quality, global warming, etc.

VMT or vehicle miles traveled, is now a transportation metric that is used to determine how many miles are driven by residents of a city, or a state, or of a project, or of a specific neighborhood, or project site. The calculation of VMT is complicated and intensive, and therefore a traffic model computer program is best suited to quickly give this answer, as this feature is built-in to most citywide traffic demand models. The City of Pasadena has such a traffic model which can accurately determine VMT totals for the entire city, and then that number can be compared with a revised VMT after a certain project is added to the model. Depending on assumptions, the VMT will either go up or down, where going down is the ideal result. Land use changes can also be plugged into the traffic model, and the analyst can determine if the change reflects better or worse on overall VMT.

The problem with VMT is that it is a very "macro level" metric (generally relating to a broad-brush citywide condition), and does not in any way begin to predict better or worse traffic conditions at an intersection or a roadway segment. Traffic conditions at intersections or along street segments still need to be analyzed using traditional Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) methodologies, which require intersection turning movement counts. The City of Pasadena's TRANSPORTATION IMPACT ANALYSIS CURRENT PRACTICE & GUIDELINES specifies in Table 3 the acceptable level of service threshold maximum values (caps) as the following intersection condition:

*"A decrease beyond LOS D Citywide or LOS E within Transit Oriented Districts (TODs) would trigger conditions of approval to reduce project vehicular trips."*

What this means is that LOS D is the standard in the City for intersection level of service, but LOS E is allowed for areas that are within a transit-oriented development (TOD), where typically higher densities of development would be taking place.

## **IV. 253 S. Los Robles Project, Specific Traffic Study Issues**

### **City's Traffic Analysis Method Needs Calibration**

Several residents who live in the vicinity of the project site, 253 S. Los Robles, have anecdotal information about their experience in traveling through congested intersections during the peak hour time periods. Specifically, they have said that two or three signal cycle waits are experienced. Since a signal cycle is typically around 70 to 80 seconds at intersections in the study area, a wait time for three signal cycles would be around 200+ seconds. Since an 80 second delay is already considered LOS F conditions, the person who waits more than one signal cycle is definitely experiencing aggravated LOS F conditions.

Traffic Engineering Review: 253 S. Los Robles, Pasadena, CA

However, in the 253 S. Los Robles traffic study prepared by DOT, all intersections whether it be AM or PM peak hours, are shown to be at LOS B conditions at all S. Los Robles intersections. How does this disparity in real world conditions comport with the analysis result? The only explanation is that the assumptions used in the analysis are either outdated, have incorrect signal timing or configuration information, or the peak hour factors of traffic are incorrect. The older methodology being used by the City (ICU vs HCM 2010) is not sensitive to these details. The Synchro 6 Intersection LOS being used by the City is based upon a "percentile" control delay computation but uses the same numerical delay thresholds as the HCM\*\*. The percentile control delay is different than the HCM control delay for the intersection. The fact remains, the DOT report says LOS B conditions exist, and residents are saying LOS F conditions exist during peak time periods for S. Los Robles traffic, and that there are long lines of cars waiting to get through signalized intersections.

A complete field survey, observing traffic operations and driver behavior in the real world is needed to verify conditions, along with utilizing of detailed traffic data such as saturation flow rate (SFR) and peak hour factors (PHF) which generally cause a realistic and worse LOS calculation compared to when they are not considered (such as in the City's ICU methods). PHF helps identify the congestion that takes place for say, school traffic in the morning but may only last for 30-40 minutes, and not the whole hour.

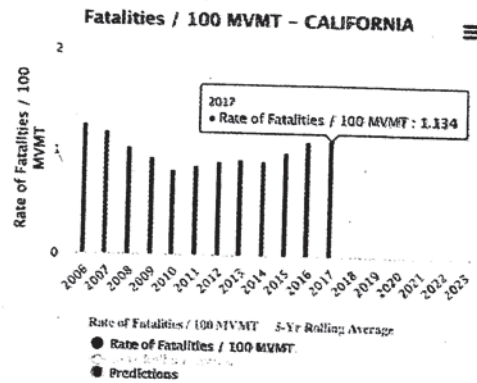
\*\*source: <https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop08054/sect4.htm>

#### **Technical Summary of Software Deficiencies in Study**

The Transportation Impact Analysis Outside of CEQA Analysis prepared for the 253 S Los Robles project, dated Feb. 6, 2018, utilized a methodology other than the methods typically used today for Item #2 in Table 3 above. In that table, the "Auto Level of Service" is said to be calculated using methods contained in the HCM, as defined by the Transportation Research Board (TRB). The latest methods of the TRB are outlined in the HCM 2010 document, and contained in the latest version of the Synchro software, version 11 released last year in 2018. The City uses a much older and outdated version 6 of this software (from year 2008), and which does not have HCM 2010 features. This older version used by Pasadena DOT today utilizes a Synchro method based on older calculation methods used in the 80's and 90's and does not incorporate the latest HCM 2010 methods which allow for more detail and accuracy of peak traffic. This method does not involve Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) in any way. Synchro calculations are based on signal timing operations, and a one-hour peak volume of traffic with peak hour factors, NOT an average of different hours or different days, but the worst-case peak condition at an intersection, determined by real-world turning movement counts. The highest one-hour time period during the entire week is to be used so that the worst-case conditions can be considered for maximum optimization. This is the norm throughout the State. However, in Pasadena this method is largely ignored as a meaningful metric for mitigation purposes, despite its common use for mitigation guidance in the vast majority of cities and counties in California, inclusive of even State Caltrans facilities. LOS and intersection operations matter because they have a direct relationship to safety. Accident rates increase as congestion increases, as is shown by an examination of the data pertaining to population growth and accident rates over the past decade. 50% of serious collisions happen at intersections. In California, the statewide accident rate of fatal accidents has been increasing steadily since 2010 (starting at 0.836 per million vehicle miles traveled,



up to 1.134 in 2017)<sup>2</sup>. Why the increase? Congestion is also increasing, especially at signalized intersections where studies have shown 83% of fatal accidents in an urban city take place at a signalized intersection<sup>3</sup>. This is why it is imperative to find solutions to safety at intersections. Because of this trend in California where the accident rate of fatal accidents has been increasing, even as the population of California<sup>4</sup> has also increased from 37.3 million people in 2010 to 39.4 million in 2017, the obvious correlation of higher number of cars/vehicles and the frequency of accidents is undisputed. The accident rate has not remained the same. When the accident rate increases, as it did in California from 2010 to 2017, this is an indicator of a



correlation between the number of cars on the road (congestion) and the increasing probability of a serious or fatal accident. California roads are becoming increasingly congested, and the statewide fatality accident *rate* is going up, indicating that increased congestion correlates with increased probability of fatality, especially at a signalized intersection.

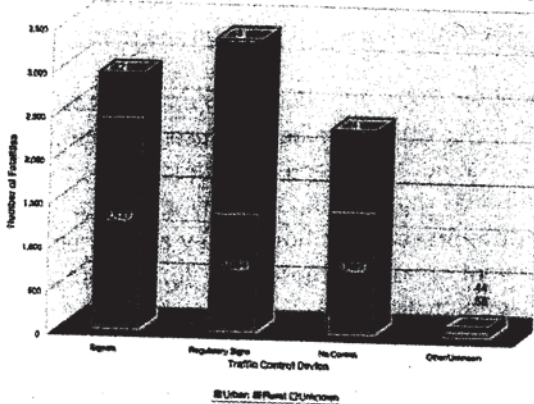


Figure 3: 2007 Fatalities at Intersections by Traffic Control Device  
source: FHWA

For these reasons relating to accident safety, the current methods of traffic analysis being used in Pasadena are insufficient, using outdated software that underestimates congestion (yields LOS results in traffic reports that are more favorable than what field conditions would anecdotally indicate). Newer software should be used, with the latest research in data and analysis. In addition, the calculation results should be calibrated by engineering field review and survey.

### Some Cities Have Been Making Evolutionary Shifts to Change the Status Quo of Transportation Basics

Despite how traffic has been analyzed for decades using LOS as the main metric to assess traffic impacts, previous DOT Director Fred Dock, recently retired, worked diligently to change that status quo in Pasadena, and instead focused on other metrics of analysis pertaining to 1) air quality, 2) VMT, and 3) travel mode shift away from cars. He stated in a recent Aug 2019 podcast<sup>5</sup> interview that during his tenure at the City of Pasadena, he worked with staff from the Governor's Office of Planning & Research (OPR). In studies the City conducted for signal timing optimization to improve efficiency in the system of signals, information was shared between OPR and the City. As a result of these improvement efforts to signal timing, they learned that traffic volumes at an intersection were able to increase (more efficient signal operations). He said he viewed it as a negative, because getting transportation funding for the City from

<sup>2</sup> Source: <https://tims.berkeley.edu/tools/safetypm/>

<sup>3</sup> Source: [https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/intersection/other\\_topics/fhwasa10005/brief\\_2.cfm](https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/intersection/other_topics/fhwasa10005/brief_2.cfm)

<sup>4</sup> Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/206097/resident-population-in-california/>

<sup>5</sup> source: <http://www.pasadenanow.com/main/former-pasadena-transportation-chief-talks-city-planning-on-podcast/#.Xfx70i2ZPok>



outside state and federal sources related to transportation improvements, made eligibility for receiving funds contingent on a city's ability to demonstrate that they have made plans to *reduce* overall traffic volumes, not increase them. What happened in the City's signal timing improvements was not an increase in traffic volumes (they were already on the road!), but was an improvement to efficiency. However, the *hourly* traffic counts showed a higher number. For example, instead of it taking say, 70 minutes for 1000 drivers in Pasadena to get through a hypothetical congested intersection, these same 1000 cars got through in 60 minutes instead, on account of an improvement to a traffic signal's timing and efficiency. Traffic counts are always summarized by *hourly* totals. What happened in the signal timing study with OPR was that more traffic was able to get through affected intersections, in an hour. Mr. Dock said that what happens with these signal timing improvement was "you wind up inducing travel." This is a theory that Mr. Dock may espouse, but is not a proven fact, and would require extensive survey studies to determine if it were true for Pasadena. Since the population of Pasadena, does not change significantly, the same number of drivers are on the road day to day. Any "increase" in traffic volumes for an hour time period through a signal is not an induced traffic increase... it was the same people, just faster and shorter times. Signal timing improvements allow better efficiency for those that are already on the road.

Pasadena's traffic mitigation fee program is showing that about 200 future buses (\$99 million cost) is to be paid for by the fee program, even though in nearly all other cities in California buses are purchased through various tax assessments instead. The reason for this is the lawful need for a direct nexus to be in place showing how traffic mitigation fees go to improve things that are impacted by a project. A bus system is a city benefit, but these do not reduce traffic or improve traffic flows. They are primarily an option for those that do not own a car, and a less convenient option for those who do. Therefore, the nexus between new development and the need for buses is not a direct link.

The reason that the nexus is lacking between the need for buses as a mitigation, and the direct additional traffic impacts that a project will have on the adjacent roadway, is because the software being used calculating VMT is not related to traffic congestion, but only how far vehicles drive (this is loosely associated with air quality improvements). Pasadena has been striving to evolve the City's examination of traffic away from LOS, safety, and congestion, to a focused look on how far drivers drive their cars as a whole (VMT). It is important to note that all VMT estimations come not from reality or a survey, but from a theoretical traffic model based on gravity equations (see next section). The VMT can never be proven and will always remain in the theoretical realm. VMT itself has never been calibrated to real world except sometimes at the most macro levels such as an average length of vehicle trip for "Journey to Work" census surveys, and this is only by County. Los Angeles County has a Journey to Work trip length of 29.3 minutes<sup>6</sup> on the average. In the City of Pasadena traffic model, a part of Los Angeles County, I observed that the longest "work trip" time (looking at the "friction factor curve") was tapering off at 20 minutes and shutting off any trip over 23 minutes, indicating that the City's model was *not* calibrated for work trip length even though there is statewide data as well as Countywide data from surveys. This is a very significant deficiency in the model when trying to estimate VMT.

### **Use of the Traffic Model to Determine Traffic Impacts at Intersections is Incorrect**

It is generally not appropriate to utilize a travel demand model tool to determine intersection turning movements, or to determine trip distribution assignments for a project, if the model is only accurate to macro level detail of roadway segments, not intersection turns. The City's traffic model has NOT been

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<sup>6</sup> Source: <https://www.indexmundi.com/facts/united-states/quick-facts/california/average-commute-time#map>



Traffic Engineering Review: 253 S. Los Robles, Pasadena, CA

calibrated to the turning movement level of traffic counts in the City's intersections. It has been generally calibrated to large link segments, like freeways and main roads, and can still have a 50% error max on some of these (considered acceptable by Caltrans, generally for Caltrans freeway and highway facilities). The map that follows represents a snapshot of part of the City's travel demand model, in the study area near to where 253 S. Los Robles is proposed. All trips in the model are assigned ONLY from one of these orange boxes (called a TAZ or traffic analysis zone) to another orange box. Generally, one TAZ is residential based, and the destination TAZ's are non-home-based (such as office, industrial, commercial, retail, school, etc.). Trips are generally assigned from TAZs that contain homes, to TAZs that contain non-home land uses.

In the graphic below, taken from the PASADENA TRAVEL DEMAND FORECASTING MODEL DEVELOPMENT REPORT appendix (see link below), it can be seen that the 253 S. Los Robles proposed project would be in TAZ #67, and would represent only 5% of the total content of that zone. This TAZ 67 is large and includes two blocks of existing development bounded by S. Los Robles on the east, Cordova on the north, E. Del Mar on the south, and Marengo on the west. With this arrangement, the 253 S. Los Robles project could just as easily be directly assigned in the model randomly to any one of the four "block" faces of the TAZ.



City's Traffic Model TAZ Structure.

Source: City of Pasadena

This is not anywhere near precise or accurate enough to utilize model-generated turning movements at an intersections, or project trip distribution assignments for the very small 253 S. Los Robles project that is contained within a very small part of TAZ 67. The project is literally only 5% of the TAZ 67 total land uses, trip assignment is 95% influenced by the other land uses in the TAZ, and S. Euclid Ave even splits TAZ 67, so that the project could even potentially be assigned in the model directly to Marengo, let alone Cordova or Del Mar, which would not be correct.

TAZ 67 is very large, two blocks, part of a macro-level model. A micro-level model at the parcel level is necessary in order to have appropriate use in assigning traffic from potential projects. Since this level of parcel-based TAZ precision does not exist in the City's model, the model should not be used for assigning



Traffic Engineering Review: 253 S. Los Robles, Pasadena, CA

project traffic at the intersection level. The level of precision to do that is not built into the model. Project traffic should be assigned manually, by a traffic engineer, in performing the traffic study.<sup>7</sup>

In the context of an EIR process, the traffic model being used as a tool to determine traffic impacts (in terms of strict VMT only) is entirely appropriate and is now State law for CEQA to do so. The traffic model is used to calculate VMT for the City before and after a project is added to the model. This enables analysis to see the positive or negative effect that a project might have on air quality, greenhouse gas reductions, etc., since CEQA no longer requires traffic impacts (delay and LOS) to be studied. However, traffic related safety, or safety in general, is a CEQA impact that can be required in an EIR.

The City's travel demand model is an extremely limited tool to determine anything beyond the macro level predictions of volumes for roadways only (usually only can predict daily volumes, and are inaccurate for peak hour volumes). California State standards for travel demand models, set by Caltrans pertaining to the calibration of travel demand model, allows for very large errors... up to 50% error when compared to a real traffic count. Generally, these macro travel demand models best predict existing and future volumes for larger roads such as freeways, where no more than a 10% error is required to calibrate. In my experience creating and using numerous traffic models, the literal output from a software model predicting existing or future volumes may be significantly in error, and according to the guidelines this is OK. What is not good practice, however, is when outputs are used literally, without engineering judgment. The best practice is to take the percentage difference in a model between existing and future volumes (say it is 80% increase on a specific roadway), and to use that percentage to multiply against an existing/real traffic count. The resulting value would be used in the traffic study for analysis. It is the most common accepted practice in my dealings with government agencies all over California.

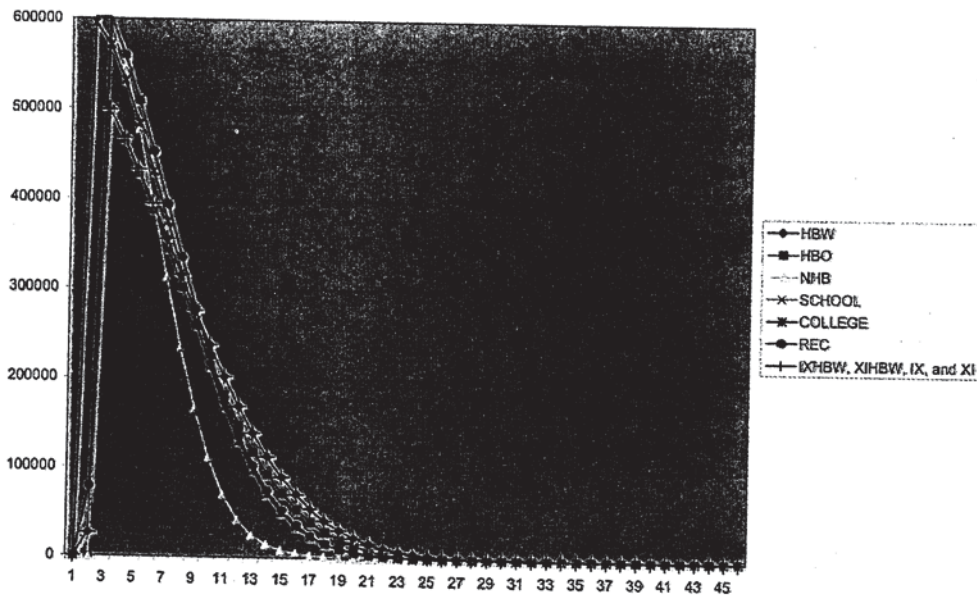
This assumption in the model, the "Friction Factor" curves (see figure below), represents how "attractive" (according to the "gravity model") a trip will be based on how many minutes it takes to get from one TAZ (traffic analysis zone, see orange boxes in figure above) to another. Notice that ALL trip categories and their curves are essentially the same values, which is not logical. All curves closely follow each other, the HBW curve (home to work), the School curve, etc. making different kinds of trips in the model no more attractive than the others... but in the real world, work trips are generally very long as most people don't live next to their place of employment, but school trips are much shorter, even neighborhood based where the child lives, as most neighborhoods have access to a nearby elementary school (that facilitates the possibility of walking).

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<sup>7</sup> \*Traffic from the project should be assigned manually, because the City's travel demand model does not have the sufficient precision to determine intersection turning movements, or to assign project traffic since the project traffic in the model could be assigned to one or more of four potential block faces of TAZ 67.



APPENDIX B  
Friction Factors



"Friction Factor Curves" in the City's Traffic Model

In the figure above for friction factor curves<sup>8</sup>, the way to interpret this chart is to first look at the bottom axis which represents minutes of travel. It can be seen that a 20-minute trip is near to the point at which all curves flatten out at zero (no longer attractive). Slightly over 20 minutes of travel time in the model there is zero "attractiveness" and so a 25-minute trip would never be assigned. Long trips are not possible. A 10-minute trip would have a friction factor value of about 220000. A 5-minute trip has a corresponding value of about 450000 for most curves. This means, a 5-minute trip in the model will be at least twice as attractive as a 10-minute trip. More traffic will be assigned from one TAZ 5 minutes away from another nearby TAZ (five minutes of travel time away).

**Project Traffic Assignment, Incomplete Analysis...**

Traffic from the project should be assigned manually, because the City's travel demand model does not have the sufficient precision to determine intersection turning movements, or to assign project traffic since the project traffic in the model could be assigned to one or more of four potential block faces of TAZ 67.

The traffic study showed a project traffic assignment as follows in the clip from Figure 3 of the report (below). Anecdotal information from residents who drive S. Los Robles on a regular basis indicates that there are currently long lines of traffic that back up on S. Los Robles in front of the proposed project site, and that the assumptions shown in Figure 3 could not happen, as there will not be a gap in traffic for project traffic to get out in the morning.

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.cityofpasadena.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/20/2362\\_Model\\_Development\\_Report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.cityofpasadena.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/20/2362_Model_Development_Report_FINAL.pdf)

Traffic Engineering Review: 253 S. Los Robles, Pasadena, CA

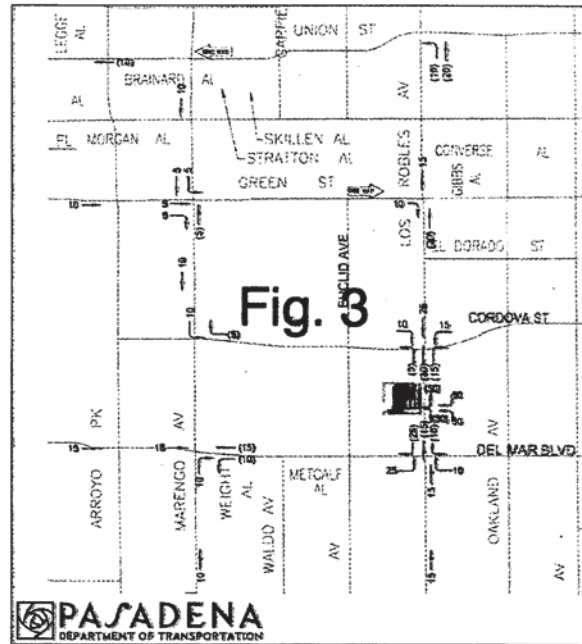
50% of the project traffic was assumed in the DOT study to make a left turn out of the project, presumably because the travel demand model showed this.

A closer look at the figure shows project traffic patterns that raises questions... such as 50% of the project turning left out to go north on S. Los Robles in the morning when there are long lines of northbound traffic already on the road that would prevent this from being reasonable/possible (no sufficient gaps in traffic).

For these kinds of reasons, manual assignments of traffic, by a traffic engineer, should have been performed so that trip distributions are reasonable, and project impacts can therefore be properly analyzed, based on real world engineering judgment of what is possible/reasonable.

The levels of service calculated for the project in the DOT study cannot be relied upon as they currently exist, because the travel demand model was the source for project traffic assignment which did not consider real world constraints of existing congestion, signal timing, pedestrian totals, and related delays. A travel demand model is not capable of this level of precision, the kind of precision required when using software like the Synchro intersection analysis tool. The City did use Synchro, but the method of calculation used was not the HCM 2000 or HCM 2010 methodologies, as the City's traffic study guidelines requires.

Traffic was assigned for the project using the City's travel demand model, which does not have the level of precision built into it to accomplish this appropriately. It was last calibrated in the year 2011 and is based on 2009 counts for base conditions. Because of this lack of precision in traffic assignment between Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs), the 253 S. Los Robles project traffic should have been assigned manually by a traffic engineer, based on engineering judgment of what is probable/reasonable. Given that there are long lines of congested traffic going northbound on S. Los Robles past the project site in the morning, it is not reasonable that the project traffic would turn left since there will not be a gap in the stop and go traffic. The project traffic is much more likely to turn right to go south out S. Los Robles and find another way to various destinations.



A 21-unit apartment building, proposed for 253 S. Los Robles Ave. in Pasadena, was rejected by the Pasadena City Council on July 22, 2018. Pasadena, California. (Property courtesy of the city of Pasadena)

# Grant Johnson, TE, Resume/CV

Principal, Project Manager/Engineer



Grant Johnson is a Principal Engineer of PRISM Engineering and is the Project Engineer all Traffic Engineering and Transportation Planning work, including Expert Witness work. He is a registered Traffic Engineer in the State of California. He has been a leader in traffic engineering and transportation planning for over 34 years. He recently spent 2.5 years doing high-level transportation and traffic engineering in the heart of mainland China, and as a result of this experience, has a very broad view of multimodal transportation. He personally daily utilized China's public transit, buses, monorail, taxis, bikes, electric scooters, and walking and never once drove a car. He is anxious to take the positive aspects of the perspective he learned there, and apply it where appropriate in the United States.

## **Total Experience**

34 Years

## **Professional Registration**

Licensed Traffic Engineer  
in the State of California  
TR #1453



Grant has much experience in traffic engineering and transportation planning services including ►multi-modal corridor studies, ►intersection alternatives studies, ►traffic operations analysis and ►micro-simulation. He has extensive experience in ►travel demand modeling, ►report writing, ►transportation master plans, ►public presentations, was ►Chief Site Engineer over 70 km of China's bullet train construction near Beijing supervising work over hundreds of engineers and construction workers, ►capital improvement programs and ►traffic mitigation fees to name a few.

## **Expert Witness Experience, Traffic Engineer**

Expert Witness cases included general examination of all roadway conditions and MUTCD compliance, etc. Recent cases involved signal malfunction and broadside fatality, railroad crossing where ped was killed, signalized intersection accident with semi-truck, crosswalk at uncontrolled intersection with severe ped injury, high school pedestrian accident in marked school crosswalk, freeway interchange complex intersection and signal w/crosswalk ped was hit and



[www.prism.engineering](http://www.prism.engineering)



## **Education**

California State  
University, Sacramento  
BS Civil Engineering  
1984

## **Professional Affiliations**

American Public Works  
Association (APWA)  
Institute of  
Transportation Engineers  
(ITE)

killed, absence of guardrail and motorist run off road accident, non-standard intersection layout w/bike and vehicle collisions, closely spaced signalized intersections and adjacent freeway ramps intersection pedestrian in ROW killed by large semi-truck.

- EW 001-100 Richmond EW Jones & Randall
- EW 001-101 Richmond EW Ms Norma Supapo
- EW 001-102 Richmond EW Sakura Sims vs City
- EW 001-103 Richmond EW Melida Diaz Railroad PED accident
- EW 002-101 San Rafael EW Ketron vs City
- EW 002-102 San Rafael EW Zaslavski vs City
- EW 003-100 PITTSBURG EW Sandoval vs City
- EW 006-101 Marin County EW Rosenthal v. Johnson, et al., Bike / vehicle accident @ Four Corners intersection
- EW 006-102 Marin County EW Goralka Speed and Stopping sight distance on Panoramic Highway
- EW 008-100 MANTECA EW Roundabout Motorcycle fatal accident
- EW 008-200 MANTECA School pedestrian accident in marked crosswalk
- EW 013-100 EMERYVILLE Abad vs City fatal pedestrian accident in crosswalk, truck involved
- EW 014-100 MODESTO Bernal vs Mendez, City, County, Caltrans
- EW 015-100 UTAH DOT, Harriman, UT
- EW 016-100 Oakley, CA, Vancil vs City
- EW 017-100 United States DOJ, Washington State

## **Traffic Engineering Experience**

- **PRISM Engineering On-Call Services contract with Marin County Public Works:** 1) Panoramic Highway intersection design study and report, 2) sight distance analyses and report, level of service analysis. (2017-2019)
- **US 101/SR 131 Interchange in Marin County.** Traffic Operations Study and Micro simulation, working with Bob Goralka of Marin County DPW. Was Project Engineer / Manager (2016)
- **Radar Speed Surveys in City of Shasta Lake,** 52 locations. Project Engineer/Manager (2015/16)



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- **Chico SR 99/Eaton Rd Interchange Traffic Operations Study** with NW Specific Plan Analysis (2015/16). Signal Installations, timing study. Realignment of Frontage Road. Micro-Simulation Analysis
- **City of Vallejo, Charter School Traffic Impact Study**, Project Engineer/Manager. Developed custom trip generation, custom GIS trip distribution, innovative mitigations and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) (2015/16).
- **LongHuXiYuan, Chongqing, China** Multi-modal Trip Generation Survey (1900 DU) for (2014)
- **Chongqing, China Parking Study** YueLai Conference Center Parking Study (2014)
- **Signal Design in Chongqing China**, Five (5) intersections Signal Design, Chongqing, CN (2013)
- **On-Call Traffic Engineering, Nevada County Transportation Commission** (2001-2012)

### **Transportation Planning Experience**

- **PRISM Engineering On-Call Traffic Engineering Services Contract with City of Vacaville Public Works: "The Farm at Alamo Creek"** Residential Annexation (780 DU), Project Engineer. Used Cube traffic model to develop future traffic, traffic impact study, freeway and intersection analyses using Synchro 9 HCM 2010. Traffic report. (2017/18)
- **City of Fairfield Travis AFB residential development.** Trip generation and HCM 2010 capacity analysis using Synchro 9. Traffic report. (2017)
- **Marin County Planning Dept., Alta Way Residential Development**, HCM 2010 analysis with Synchro 9 and Traffic Report including sight distance analysis.
- **City of Vallejo, Charter School** (1400 stu) Traffic Impact Study, Project Engineer/Manager. Developed custom trip generation, custom GIS trip distribution, innovative intersection and street calming mitigations and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) (2015/16)
- **Chongqing China YueLai Newtown** VISSUM Traffic Model Development, Chongqing, CN (2013/14)
- **Vacaville, CA Quinn Crossing Apartments TIS**, (2012)
- **Vacaville, CA 4200 DU and School Annexation Study** of Leisure Town East, (2011)
- **Vacaville, CA Leisure Town Bypass**, Traffic Model Alternatives, (2010)
- **City of Los Banos, CA Citywide TRANSCAD Model Development**, 600 zones, (2007)
- **City of Los Banos, CA Transportation Master Plan**, (2007-08)



- **On-Call Transportation Planning, Nevada County Transportation Commission** Numerous planning studies, RTP assistance, (2001-2012 continuously)
- **TRANSCAD Model Services, Nevada County Transportation Commission** (2001-2012 cont.)

## **Project Management**

- **Chief Site Engineer in Liaoning Province in China over Engineering Design and Construction Inspection / Stop Order authority** for 70 km of China's bullet train construction of tunnels, bridges, viaduct, foundations, piers, towers, and stations. Oversaw manufacturing of concrete, rebar, and quality control. Held regular meetings with Chinese government officials over the train construction. Worked with Chinese engineers in an all-Mandarin environment.

## **Transit Planning in China, Major Projects**

- Grant Johnson designed in AutoCAD layers: 1) Bus Transit Routes & Stations Plan, 2) Bike Trails and Striping Plan, 3) Complete Streets and Traffic Calming Striping and Pavement Markings, 4) Crosswalk and all On street Parking and Traffic Control, YueLai Newtown, Chongqing, CN (2014)
- Transit Hub with Subway Monorail Access by escalator, Taxi Lanes, Bus Stop Lanes, Ped Bridges, Bike Lanes and Roundabout Circling Transit Hub, YueLai Newtown, Chongqing, CN (2014)

## **Roundabouts**

- **Caltrans SR 49 / Pleasant Valley Road at Faith Lane**, Stonehenge Springs Traffic Impact Study and analysis, report (2017)
- **Roundabout Study I-80 Lewis Road and Weber Road interchanges**, Solano County, CA (2012)
- **SR 49 Freeway Ramps and Main Street** intersection Roundabout, Grass Valley, CA (2002)





# EDUCATION. PROFESSIONAL LICENSES

**Grant P. Johnson, TE**  
**Principal**  
**PRISM Engineering**  
**PROJECT MANAGER and ENGINEER**



Currently Registered as a Traffic Engineer in the State of California  
TR #1453

Received BS in Civil Engineering from California State University, Sacramento in 1984

The Trustees of  
**THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
On recommendation of the faculty of the  
**SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE**  
**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO**  
have conferred upon  
**GRANT PHILLIP JOHNSON**  
in recognition of the fulfillment of the requirements, the degree of  
**BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN CIVIL ENGINEERING**  
with all the rights, privileges, and honors therein pertaining



GIVEN at Sacramento this thirty-first day of May, nineteen hundred eighty-four

James A. Anderson  
Governor of California and President of the System

John M. Gurnea  
President of the System



W. Anne Reynolds  
Chancellor of the California State University

Victor J. Johnston  
President of the System

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## Jomsky, Mark

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**From:** Jane Laudeman <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 11, 2020 12:15 PM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** 253 South Los Robles- Traffic, Trees and Development

**CAUTION:** This email was delivered from the Internet. Do not click links or open attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Mark Jomsky,

Livable Pasadena is a coalition of residents dedicated to finding a community development balance in Pasadena. Specifically, we are interested in bolstering our green spaces, in preserving our historic architectural heritage, and ensuring that Pasadena continues to be the livable city we love.

Most Pasadenans agree that our city is unique in Southern California. We have a legacy of architectural treasures, many highly regarded educational and cultural institutions, and our green tree canopy is widespread and well established. Pasadena has been built, preserved, and expanded gently through the passion people share for a distinct, livable community - large enough to attract the very best opportunities for schooling, working, shopping, dining and entertainment, but small enough in scale to be accessible.

These goals are imbedded in the city's General Plan and other guiding documents that govern city planning. The city came together to define, as a community, Pasadena's future. We envisioned a city with many distinct areas with their own feel and purpose, but all with family friendly places where we could come together: the Playhouse District, Old Town, South Fair Oaks, and the Central District to name a few. Pasadena should be a place filled with many different types of people, but one in which we all belong to a close-knit community. Yet, Pasadena is growing in ways that threaten to destroy its livability.

The City has not been a good guardian for Pasadena's livability in recent years. Too many projects are getting built by developers focused only on their profitability. Developers are racing to build large scale,

01/13/2020  
Item 9



high-density projects

filled with luxury condominiums and apartments. These projects are quickly being approved while we see no

affordable housing for local hardworking employees, schoolteachers, young professionals, technicians, and new

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Pasadena livable.

Jane Laudeman

janelaudeman@yahoo.com

1390 S. Marengo Ave.

Pasadena, California 91106

## Jomsky, Mark

---

**From:** Valerie Leiva <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 11, 2020 12:13 PM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** 253 South Los Robles- Traffic, Trees and Development

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Mark Jomsky,

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Valerie Leiva  
gleiva1@earthlink.net  
475 La Loma Rd  
Pasadena, California 91105

## Jomsky, Mark

---

**From:** Matthew Maechling <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 11, 2020 8:43 AM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** 253 South Los Robles- Traffic, Trees and Development

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Matthew Maechling  
mmaechling@mac.com  
1667 San Pasqual Street  
Pasadena , California 91106

**Jomsky, Mark**

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**From:** Page Malloy <malloy@sbcglobal.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 12, 2020 8:27 AM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** I support Living Pasadena-"LP"  
**Attachments:** Livable Pasadena Statement.pdf

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Dear Mark,

As a resident of Pasadena, specifically, Madison Heights, we are in support of Living Pasadena. It is so disappointing that residents have had little say in what is being approved in our beautiful and historic Pasadena.

We urge you and those in charge of making these decisions, to pause and think of the city, the residents, the history and the future of Pasadena.

Thank you,

Page and Justin Malloy

675 Arden Road

Pasadena, 91106





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## Jomsky, Mark

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**From:** Elana McNerny <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 11, 2020 10:26 AM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** 253 South Los Robles- Traffic, Trees and Development

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Elana McInerny  
elanamcinerny@mac.com  
478 Alpine Street  
Pasadena, California 91106

## Jomsky, Mark

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**From:** Jennifer Melyan <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 11, 2020 10:00 AM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** 253 South Los Robles- Traffic, Trees and Development

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Jennifer Melyan  
jennifermelyan@gmail.com  
765 Magnolia Ave  
Pasadena , California 91106

## **Jomsky, Mark**

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**From:** Jason Neville <jasonsneville@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 10, 2020 8:52 AM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** 253 South Los Robles - Support

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Hi Mark-

Wanted to express my strong support for the proposed project at 253 South Los Robles, for the following reasons:

- 1) We desperately need more affordable housing in Pasadena
- 2) The project density is appropriate for a major intersection near transit and amenities
- 3) Opponents have expressed concerns about increased [car] traffic. I drive past this site every day and a) the traffic isn't that bad and b) a few dozen more trips a day isn't going to make it that much worse.

Car traffic is not created by housing, it's created by cars. If people are concerned about car traffic, they should support reductions in single passenger trips, which are currently 71% of Pasadena trips according to the 2018 American Community Survey. If just 10% of those single occupancy drivers instead carpooled, biked, walked or took transit, the car traffic would be far more reduced than opposing needed affordable housing like this.

Jason Neville  
128 N Oak Knoll #304  
Pasadena CA 91101

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## Jomsky, Mark

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**From:** Chelsey Page <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 10, 2020 9:44 PM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** 253 South Los Robles- Traffic, Trees and Development

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Chelsey Page  
coverst@hotmail.com  
2258 Midlothian Drive  
Altadena, California 91001

## Jomsky, Mark

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**From:** Alyson Pernecky <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 10, 2020 6:44 PM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** 253 South Los Robles- Traffic, Trees and Development

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Alyson Pernecky  
apernecky@mac.com  
1177 Parkview Avenue  
Pasadena , California 91103



## Jomsky, Mark

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**From:** sushma ramarao <sushmadarkar@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 11, 2020 5:23 PM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** 253 S Los Robles

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Sushma Adarkar  
270 S Arroyo Blvd  
Pasadena

## Jomsky, Mark

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**From:** Suzanne Sanchez <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 10, 2020 8:56 PM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** 253 South Los Robles- Traffic, Trees and Development

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Mark Jomsky,

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Pasadena livable.

Suzanne Sanchez

suzanneclarksanchez@yahoo.com

1400 S Oak Knoll

Pasadena, California 91106

## Jomsky, Mark

---

**From:** shepherd1295@gmail.com <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 11, 2020 8:10 AM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** 253 South Los Robles- Traffic, Trees and Development

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shepherd1295@gmail.com  
1295 Lombardy Road  
Pasadena, California 91106



## Jomsky, Mark

---

**From:** Kimberly Shepherd <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 11, 2020 8:09 AM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** 253 South Los Robles- Traffic, Trees and Development

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Kimberly Shepherd  
rkshepherd@earthlink.net  
1295 Lombardy Road  
Pasadena, California 91106

## Jomsky, Mark

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**From:** Teri Shikasho <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 10, 2020 11:02 PM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** 253 South Los Robles- Traffic, Trees and Development

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Teri Shikasho  
teri.shikasho@gmail.com  
720 magnolia ave  
Pasadena, California 91106

## Jomsky, Mark

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**From:** Anne-Elizabeth Sobieski <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 10, 2020 6:36 PM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** 253 South Los Robles- Traffic, Trees and Development

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Anne-Elizabeth Sobieski  
aesobieski@gmail.com  
521 Grand Avenue  
South Pasadena, California 91030



## Jomsky, Mark

---

**From:** Elizabeth Stellwagen <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 10, 2020 10:24 PM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** 253 South Los Robles- Traffic, Trees and Development

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Elizabeth Stellwagen  
maxmook5@aol.com  
1057 Prospect Blvd.  
Pasadena, California 91103

## Jomsky, Mark

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**From:** Rashmi Turner <info@sg.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 10, 2020 9:10 PM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** 253 South Los Robles- Traffic, Trees and Development

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Rashmi Turner  
rashmiturner@earthlink.net  
626 church canyon  
Altadena , California 91001

**Jomsky, Mark**

---

**From:** Stacey Fortner <sfortner@me.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 13, 2020 12:22 PM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** Livable Pasadena Statement.pdf  
**Attachments:** Livable Pasadena Statement.pdf

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Hello Mark,  
Below please find letter I am supporting. Please add to support of tonight's agenda item.  
Thank you  
Stacey Fortner  
40 Arroyo Dr UNIT 102  
Pasadena, CA 91105

Sent from my iPhone



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**Jomsky, Mark**

---

**From:** Frances Morrison <francesmorrison@me.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 13, 2020 10:57 AM  
**To:** Jomsky, Mark  
**Subject:** 253 s los robles

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To whom it may concern,

My husband and I recently visited La Verne California. despite growing up in Pasadena, I had never spent time in towns to the east. We were charmed by the small houses, adorable Main Street, and tree-lined streets. It felt livable, comfortable, and full of history and charm. As we were driving down the street I realized I am already mourning the old Pasadena that I grew up in. With all of the new development and loss of trees, it feels like the Pasadena that I knew is rapidly disappearing.

I implore you to reconsider the plans for 253 S. Los Robles and Arroyo Parkway/California blvd. I suggest that city leaders visit areas that have not yet been overdeveloped to remind them what Pasadena used to feel like. Once the historic charm of the town is lost, it cannot be regained. Pasadena has always been unique in the Los Angeles area but is rapidly losing itself and becoming a carbon copy of bland, newly developed cities.

Please start to consider what we are losing with these developments as much as what is gained.

Sincerely,

Frances Morrison, MD, MPH, MA  
Pasadena native



January 13, 2019

Pasadena City Council  
 City of Pasadena  
 100 North Garfield Avenue  
 Pasadena, California 91101

RECEIVED  
 2020 JAN 13 PM 2:23  
 CITY CLERK  
 CITY OF PASADENA

RE: Affordable Housing Concession Permit #1869: 253 South Los Robles Avenue

Dear Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council:

Pasadena Heritage continues to have concerns about the project at 253 S. Los Robles Avenue because of the impact on traffic in our City's urban core and on adjacent residential neighborhoods. It is important that the City Council fully contemplate the project's impacts tonight in a public forum.

We note that the revised project has some improvements in height, massing and affordability since the project's last iteration. In this latest downscaled version, the affordable housing percentage has actually been improved. While this is a step forward, it also indicates that the concessions and extra units that were indicated as needed to offset the affordable units in the last version were indeed excessive. We also note that these requested concessions are almost in line with the Concession Menu that the City passed in 2019, which we helped to craft.

The major unaddressed issue is the traffic impact, as well as noise, air quality, and public safety that come with additional traffic. With three new large-scale residential projects confined to one block of South Los Robles Avenue added to other major construction in the immediate area, it is clear that there will be a dramatic increase in traffic. This traffic will pour out onto the already clogged arterials of Los Robles, Del Mar, and California. We challenge the project to further mitigate these impacts through exploration of more efficient transportation alternatives including car share for residents, transit passes, or by providing parking off site. Reducing the subterranean parking from three levels to two would decrease building cost and these cost savings could be passed on to future tenants.

We believe that the VMT threshold is set far too high, especially for projects in the Central District, and therefore it is nearly impossible for any project to show a significant traffic impact, though clearly these impacts are real. If the City of Pasadena and the State of California want to incentivize urban infill housing in the urban core, then we should not expect those new urban residents to drive according to existing suburban trends. We appreciate that Transportation Director Laura Cornejo will present on VMT methodology

later tonight, and we suggest a reduction of the current threshold. We believe that in the Central District, where there is greater walkability and more transit options, VMT thresholds should be lower than in suburban residential zones. The city's current approach has led to more congestion and less safe conditions for pedestrians, while indirectly increasing the cost of housing.

We ask that the Council tonight review this project not in a vacuum, but with attention to the wider context and trends of the current built environment. We also offer to work with the Planning Department and the Department of Transportation to develop more modern, effective thresholds. Thank you for your consideration and care in reviewing this project.

Sincerely yours,



Susan N. Mossman  
Executive Director



Andrew Salimian  
Preservation Director

cc: David Reyes  
Talyn Mirzakhani  
Laura Comejo



**Martinez, Ruben**

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**Subject:** FW: 253 s los robles proposed building

**From:** Molly Kennington <[themoll@dslextreame.com](mailto:themoll@dslextreame.com)>

**Date:** January 13, 2020 at 4:31:50 PM PST

**To:** "Jomsky, Mark" <[mjomsky@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:mjomsky@cityofpasadena.net)>

**Subject:** FW: 253 s los robles proposed building

**CAUTION:** This email was delivered from the Internet. Do not click links or open attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Mr. Jomsky,

Please add this text to the agenda item's correspondence for tonight's meeting.

It was sent to the wrong address.

Thanks,

Molly Kennington

355 South Los Robles Avenue

**From:** Oscar Valdes <[valdes2030@gmail.com](mailto:valdes2030@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Monday, January 13, 2020 4:03 PM

**To:** [m.jomsky@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:m.jomsky@cityofpasadena.net)

**Cc:** Molly <[themoll@dslextreame.com](mailto:themoll@dslextreame.com)>

**Subject:** 253 s los robles proposed building

dear Sir,

there are presently a large number of units under construction in the area with many units now ready or being readied for sale.

this, in addition to the Kaiser medical school to open this summer.

the least that responsible city planning should do

is to allow time to see what impact the new units in process

will have on our infrastructure.

I fear our Mayor is not being thoughtful enough on this sensitive matter that affects so many people in the area.

as president of the board of the Los Robles Plaza Homeowners Association

I am expressing to you my grave concern.

Thanks,

Oscar Valdes