

IDA

City of Santa Monica Planning Commission

~~JAN 27 2004~~
FEB 10 2004

October 1, 2003

Dear City Council:

At the July 23, 2003 meeting of the Planning Commission, the Commission invited City staff and local scholars to present the latest in traffic modeling technology and analysis. The presentations were illuminating, and the Commission would like to pass on some of the key findings and potential uses for the City. We believe the upcoming review of the City's Circulation Element will benefit by including a review of traffic analysis methods and technology.

The Traffix model currently utilized for transportation planning and analysis of project impacts was developed almost twenty years ago. Many cities currently use this model or a similar technology. Professors Will Recker and Mike McMally of the Institute for Transportation Studies at the University of California Irvine presented new capabilities of the latest technology. The most useful capabilities identified were:

1 Traffic Segment Analysis

- Analyzes the impact of traffic changes on specific segments, such as residents, visitors, through-commuters, and users of new project.

2. Trip Analysis

- Analyzes the impact of traffic changes on various types of trips based on duration of trip, distance traveled, likelihood of trip, behavioral characteristics of drivers, etc.

3. Visualization

- Provides computer simulation of the impact of traffic changes, enabling users to view the intersections in question.

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4 Multi-Modal Integration

Considers the effect of pedestrian, bike, bus and truck traffic, as well as specific accommodations for them, such as crosswalks.

The Circulation Element is due for review and update within the year. Consideration of technology improvements to the City's traffic analysis models should be coordinated with review of the Element. Updated models and methods can assist in the development of the Element and in the subsequent implementation of its goals and objectives.

Some traffic modeling can be very costly, and the Commission uncovered potential cost savings. Specifically, many of the new technologies rely on trip modeling. Getting this type of data for the model can be challenging, but using proxies, such as SCAG data or templates from other cities may reduce costs.

In sum, the Commission would like the City Council to consider an update to the City's traffic analysis methodology and technology as part of the Circulation Element review. Such a decision would improve the quality of the Element and its implementation.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darrell Clarke', written over a large, light-colored scribble or mark.

PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE
CITY OF SANTA MONICA
Darrell Clarke, Chairperson