The New San Jose Transportation Policy

Reforming Traffic LOS Policies to Support Smart Growth

Presented by: Hans Larsen, Deputy Director City of San Jose Department of Transportation
Bay Area Population

San Jose (990,000)
San Francisco (825,000)
Oakland (420,000)
San José Growth History

Population

1.5 M
1.0 M
0.5 M

1930  1955  1980  2005  2030
Rail Transit Plan

- **LRT/Rapid Bus**
  - Existing
  - Planned

- **Caltrain**

- **BART**
  - Existing
  - San Jose Extension
Planned Growth Areas

- Transit Corridors
- North San José
- Downtown
- Berryessa BART
- Evergreen
- Edenvale
- Coyote Valley
Proposed Development Example
North San Jose - Before
Proposed Development Example
North San Jose - After
Proposed Development Example
Strip Shopping Center - After
Proposed Development Example
Bus Rapid Transit Corridor - Before
Proposed Development Example

Bus Rapid Transit Corridor - After
Traffic Level of Service Policy
Previous Policy and Issues

- Established in 1970’s; Automobile focused
- LOS “D” Standard
- Mitigation can impact pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- Not supportive of infill and transit oriented development
- Doesn’t allow for Council “exceptions” of policy
- General Plan changed in 2001 to allow a flexible transportation policy to support land use plans
Transportation Policy Update

Key Outcomes

- Support higher density, mixed use and pedestrian friendly development for special planning areas designated in General Plan
- Preserve LOS D traffic standards for existing suburban neighborhoods
- Facilitate a Citywide multimodal transportation system
- Continue to link land development with transportation improvement
- Provide an efficient and predictable implementation process for developers
New San Jose LOS Policy
(Approved June 2005)

- **Exempt Area**
  - Downtown

- **Area Development Policies**
  (Master EIR w/ "LOS Override")
  - North San Jose
    (83,000 jobs/ 32,000 homes)
  - Edenvale
    (20,000 jobs/ 2,000 homes)

- **“Protected Intersections”**
  - Transit Stations/ Corridors
  - Specific Plans
  - Neighborhood Business Districts
“Protected Intersection” Policy

- Master EIR overrides LOS at protected intersections
  - 25 approved locations

- Development to construct “offsetting improvements”
  - “Overriding consideration” for exceeding LOS “D” standard
  - Value of improvements is $2,000 per trip

- Scope of improvements to be coordinated with adjacent community
  - Ped facilities, streetscapes, traffic calming, transit stop enhancements
Closing Perspectives

- Reform or Eliminate Auto LOS Policies
  - Intention is congestion management
  - Outcome is low density, auto oriented sprawl
  - Inconsistent with policy goals for greenhouse gas reduction (AB 32) and sustainable communities (SB 375)

- Limit CEQA Significance of LOS
  - Project level disclosure information
  - Guide operational improvements

- Focus CEQA Analysis on Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)
  - Mix land uses to reduce trip lengths
  - Promote non-auto mode shift
  - Facilitate transit oriented development

- Reform Caltrans Perspectives
  - Land use, freeway LOS analysis, transportation mitigation
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