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Appendix M: Performance Standards for Infill Projects Eligible for Streamlined Review

I. Introduction

Section 15183.3 provides a streamlined review process for infill projects that satisfy performance standards that promote a set of statewide policy objectives set forth in Section 21094.5.5 of the Public Resources Code. This appendix contains those performance standards. The lead agency's determination that the project satisfies the performance standards shall be supported with substantial evidence, which may be documented on the Infill Checklist in Appendix N. Performance standards that apply to all project types are set forth in Section II. Section III contains performance standards that apply to particular project types (i.e., residential, commercial/retail, office building, transit stations, and schools). Projects containing mixed uses must satisfy the standards of each applicable use type in Section III.

II. Performance Standards Applying to All Project Types

To be eligible for streamlining pursuant to Section 15183.3, a project must implement all of the following:

Renewable Energy. All projects shall include renewable energy components, such as solar rooftops, where feasible.

Active Transportation. The project shall include elements that promote the use of transit or active transportation (i.e., walking, bicycling and other forms of human powered transportation), such as pedestrian or bicycle access to transit stops, schools, parks, commercial areas and other local destinations.

Transit Station Area Plans. Where a project is proposed within ½ mile of an existing or planned transit station, the project shall be consistent with the provisions of a plan for land uses surrounding the transit station, such as a station area plan, transit village plan, or general plan policies addressing station areas. An amendment to a general plan that is proposed as part of the project for the purposes of achieving consistency with a sustainable communities strategy, alternative planning strategy, or a station area plan adopted by a transit district shall be considered to achieve this standard.

Soil and Water Remediation. If the project site is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code, the project shall implement the recommendations provided in a Phase I environmental assessment, or if one is prepared, a preliminary endangerment assessment.

III. Performance Standards by Project Type

In addition to the project features described above in Section II, specific eligibility requirements are provided below by project type.

A. Residential

The eligibility requirements for residential projects vary depending on the level of per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT)ⁱ associated with the project as set forth below.

Projects achieving 75 percent of regional per capita VMT. A residential project is eligible if it achieves a level of existing per capita VMT that is less than 75 percent of the per capita VMT for the metropolitan planning organization within which the project is located (“regional VMT”). A project can achieve that level of VMT by locating in a low VMT traffic analysis zoneⁱⁱ within the region, in a low VMT locale (i.e., urban areas, city centers or near transit),ⁱⁱⁱ and/or by including VMT-reducing project features.^{iv}

Projects achieving between 75 percent and 100 percent of regional per capita VMT. If a project’s per capita VMT is between 75 percent and 100 percent of regional VMT, as determined using either the location or project design methods described above, the project shall also implement the necessary prerequisite and elective measures associated with CALGreen Tier 1. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 24, Part 11, Appendix A4.)

Projects exceeding 100 percent of regional per capita VMT. If a project’s per capita VMT, as determined using either the location or project design methods described above, exceeds the regional average VMT, the project shall also implement the necessary prerequisite and elective measures associated with CALGreen Tier 2. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 24, Part 11, Appendix A4.)

Projects Near High-Volume Roadways. In addition to the standards described above, if a residential project is located within 500 feet of a high volume roadway, or other distance determined to be appropriate by the local agency or local air district based on local conditions, the project shall also comply with any policies and standards identified in the local general plan, specific plan, zoning code or community risk reduction plan for the protection of public health. Unless more specifically defined at the local level, “high-volume roadway” means freeways, highways, urban roads with 100,000 vehicles per day, or rural roads with 50,000 vehicles per day. If the local government has not adopted such plans or policies, the residential project shall include measures, such as enhanced air filtration and project design, that the lead agency determines, based on substantial evidence, will promote the protection of public health. Those measures may include, among others, the recommendations of the California Air Resources Board and local air districts.

B. Commercial/Retail

In addition to the project features described above in Section II, commercial and retail projects below 75,000 square feet must do one of the following:

Regional Location. A project located within a traffic analysis zone that is less than 75 percent of regional per capita VMT is eligible. A project located within a traffic analysis zone that is between 75 percent and 100 percent of regional per capita VMT is eligible if the project also implements the necessary prerequisite and elective measures associated with CALGreen Tier 1. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 24, Part 11, Appendix A5.) A project located within a traffic analysis zone that exceeds 100 percent of regional per capita VMT is eligible if the project also implements the necessary prerequisite and elective measures associated with CALGreen Tier 2. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 24, Part 11, Appendix A5.)

Proximity to Households. A project located within one-half mile of 1200 households, as measured along the pedestrian network, is eligible.

Transit Proximity and Low Parking. A project located within one-quarter mile of a transit stop, and with no more than 15 percent of its surface area devoted to parking, is eligible.

Any commercial and retail projects, including those exceeding 75,000 square feet, are eligible if a transportation study prepared for the project demonstrates that the project would reduce total existing VMT.

C. Office Building

In addition to the project features described above in Section II, office buildings^v, both commercial and public, are eligible if they locate both (1) within a traffic analysis zone that exhibits average residential per capita VMT of 75 percent of regional average and (2) within one-quarter mile radius of a transit stop.

D. Transit

Transit stations that implement the project features described above in Section II are eligible.

E. Schools

In addition to the project features described above in Section II, schools are eligible if they also satisfy the following:

Elementary schools within one pedestrian network mile of fifty percent of the projected student population are eligible. Middle schools and high schools within two pedestrian network miles of fifty percent of the projected student population are eligible.

Additionally, in order to be eligible, all schools shall provide parking and storage for bicycles and scooters and shall comply with Sections 17213, 17213.1 and 17213.2 of the California Education Code.

F. Small Walkable Community Projects

Small walkable community projects, as defined in Section 15183.3, subdivision (e)(6), that implement the project features described above are eligible.

ⁱ Per capita VMT refers to either home-based VMT or household VMT. Per capita home-based VMT includes only trips that start or end at home and can be calculated using existing 4-step transportation models. Per capita household VMT includes all vehicle travel generated by a household and can be calculated using newer activity-based models.

ⁱⁱ A Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) is an analytical unit used by a travel demand model. A regional travel demand model develops an origin-destination table for all origins and destinations within the region. Origins and destinations, they are aggregated into TAZs. The travel demand model, which is the best tool to depict regional location on VMT, can provide estimates of vehicle travel as fine grained as the TAZ.

ⁱⁱⁱ If project location is the basis of the VMT determination, the lead agency should reference the project's location on a map illustrating levels of regional per capita VMT. Such maps may be developed by the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Regional VMT maps can also be produced using VMT data developed by the MPO for traffic analysis zones based on the regional travel demand model.

^{iv} If project features are the basis of the VMT determination, a sketch tool (i.e., CalEEMod or URBEMIS) can be used to calculate a project's estimated VMT generation. If a project would generate more than 75% of average per capita VMT for the region, the project's VMT may be further reduced by implementing additional travel demand management measures (such as bicycle facilities, increased density, dedicated affordable units, etc.).

^v For the purposes of this appendix, "office buildings" generally refer to centers for governmental or professional services; however, the lead agency shall have discretion in determining whether a project is more "commercial" or "office building" in nature based on local zoning codes.