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# Fire Station 41 Vehicle Miles Traveled Screening Assessment

***Prepared for:***

County of San Bernardino

***Prepared by:***



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November 2024

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## 1.0 PROJECT INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to evaluate the Fire Station 41 Project's VMT analysis requirements and compliance with Senate Bill 743 (SB 743) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

### 1.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project is located at the southeast corner of Twentynine Palms Outer Highway South and Joshua Lane South intersection within the Town of Yucca Valley. The Project will be developed on a vacant 1.72-acre lot owned by San Bernardino County with construction of a 13,230 square feet fire station and associated facilities. The Project will house 5 personnel, 1 fire engine, and 1 paramedic truck. Access to the Project site will be provided via one access point along Twentynine Palms Outer Highway South (public) and one access point along Joshua Lane South (emergency vehicles).

Figure 1-1 shows the Project site plan.

### 1.2 SENATE BILL 743

On September 27, 2013, SB 743 was signed into State law and started a process intended to fundamentally change transportation impact analysis as part of the CEQA compliance. The California Natural Resource Agency updated the CEQA transportation analysis guidelines in 2018. In this update automobile delay and LOS metrics are no longer to be used in determining transportation impacts. Instead VMT metrics will serve as the basis in determining impacts. Furthermore, the guidelines stated that after July 1, 2020, transportation analysis under CEQA must use VMT to determine impacts for land use projects.

### 1.3 GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

The Project is also within the County of San Bernardino. The Town of Yucca Valley has not adopted guidance on evaluating VMT for transportation impacts under CEQA. Therefore, the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority *Recommended Traffic Impact Analysis Guidelines for Vehicle Miles Traveled and Level of Service Assessment*, February 2020<sup>1</sup>, hereafter referred to as "Guidelines", will be used for this analysis.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gosbcta.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Sample-TIA-Guidelines.pdf>





## 2.0 ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

The Guidelines require a 4-step process<sup>2</sup> for VMT analysis:

1. Project Screening
2. Assessment of Non-Screened Development
3. Identify VMT Impact Threshold
4. Mitigation Measures

### 2.1 SCREENING CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

The Guidelines detail the requirements for the project's VMT analysis consistent with CEQA including three (3) types of screening<sup>3</sup> to determine if a project could be screened out from conducting a detailed project level VMT analysis.

- *Transit Priority Area (TPA)* – The project is located within a TPA, has a floor-area ratio (FAR) greater than 0.75, provides parking less than or equal to the City's Municipal Code requirements, is consistent with the applicable Sustainable Communities Strategy, and does not replace any affordable residential units with moderate- or high-income residential units.
- *Low VMT Area Screening* – Residential and office projects located within a low VMT-generating area may be presumed to have a less than significant impact absent substantial evidence to the contrary. In addition, other employment-related and mixed-use land use projects may qualify for the use of screening if the project can reasonably be expected to generate VMT per resident, per worker, or per service population that is similar to the existing land uses in the low VMT area.
- Project Type Screening:
  - Local serving retail projects less than 50,000 square feet may be presumed to have a less than significant impact absent substantial evidence to the contrary. Local serving retail generally improves the convenience of shopping close to home and has the effect of reducing vehicle travel.
  - In addition to local serving retail, the following uses can also be presumed to have a less than significant impact absent substantial evidence to the contrary as their uses are local serving in nature:
    - Local-serving K-12 schools
    - Local parks
    - Day care centers
    - Local-serving gas stations
    - Local-serving banks
    - Local-serving hotels (e.g. non-destination hotels)
    - Student housing projects on or adjacent to college campuses
    - Local-serving assembly uses (places of worship, community organizations)
    - Community institutions (Public libraries, fire stations, local government)
    - Local serving community colleges that are consistent with the assumptions noted in the RTP/SCS

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<sup>2</sup> Guidelines, Pages 25-30

<sup>3</sup> Guidelines, Pages 25-27

- Affordable or supportive housing
- Assisted living facilities
- Senior housing (as defined by HUD)
- Projects generating less than 110 daily vehicle trips. This generally corresponds to the following “typical” development potentials:
  - 11 single family housing units
  - 16 multi-family, condominiums, or townhouse housing units
  - 10,000 sq. ft. of office
  - 15,000 sq. ft. of light industrial
  - 63,000 sq. ft. of warehousing
  - 79,000 sq. ft. of high cube transload and short-term storage warehouse

## 2.2 VMT ASSESSMENT FOR NON-SCREENED DEVELOPMENT

Projects that do not meet any of the screening criteria identified would need to perform a VMT analysis per the Guidelines. The Project would need evaluate the appropriate VMT metrics and compare them to thresholds to determine significance as defined by the Guidelines<sup>4</sup>.

## 2.3 VMT THRESHOLDS

A project would result in a significant project-generated VMT impact if either of the following conditions are satisfied:

- The baseline project-generated VMT per service population exceeds the Town of Yucca Valley’s VMT per service population, or
- The cumulative project-generated VMT per service population exceeds the Town of Yucca Valley’s VMT per service population.

## 3.0 PROJECT VMT ASSESSMENT

The Project is proposing the construction of a 13,230 square feet fire station and associated facilities.

### 3.1 SCREENING CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

**TPA** – The Project is not located within a TPA as shown in **Figure 3-1**. Therefore, the Project **does not qualify for this criterion**.

**Low VMT Area Screening** – The Project does not include residential, office, or other employment related use and therefore **does not qualify for this criterion**.

**Project Type Screening** – The Project includes a fire station which qualifies as a community institution. **Therefore, the Project would be presumed to have a less than significant VMT impact.**

### 3.2 CONCLUSION

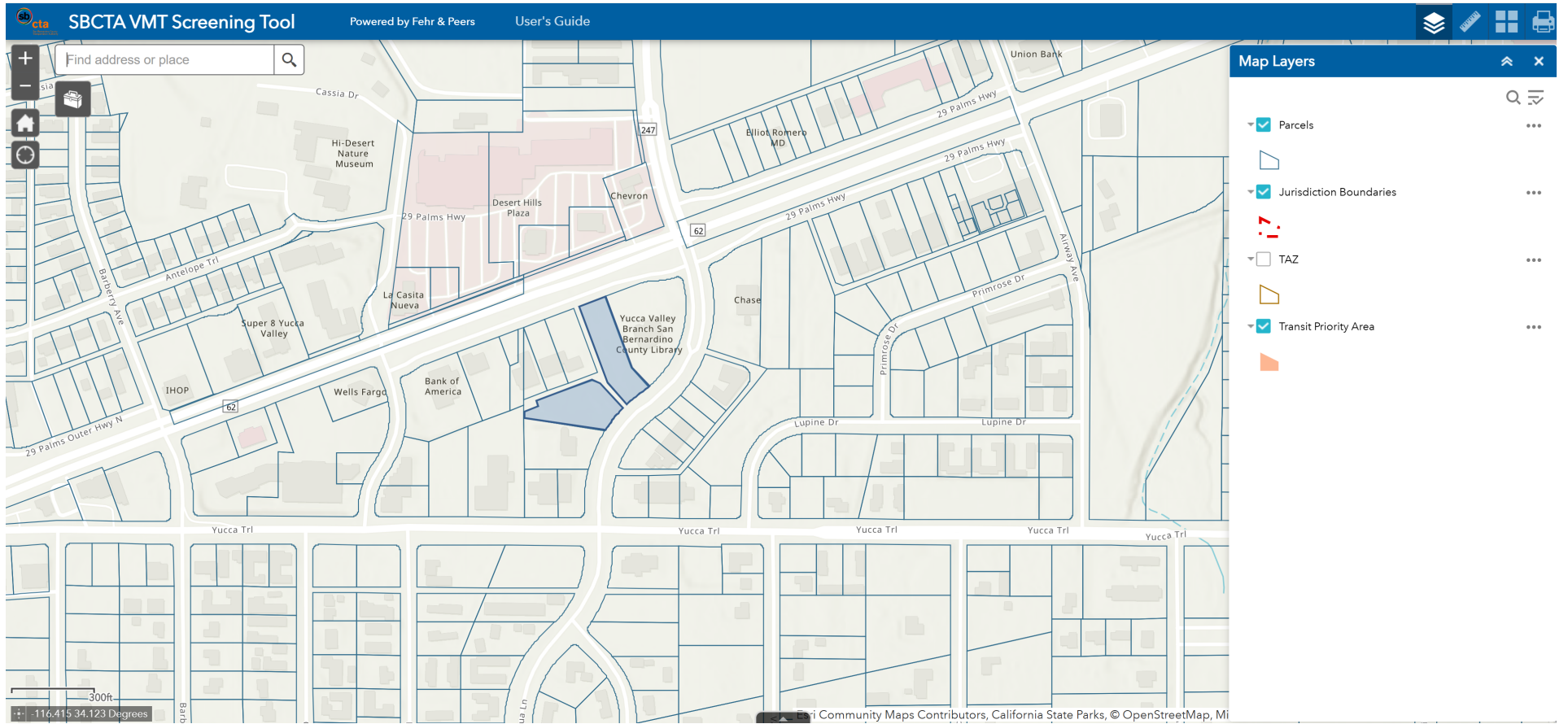
As concluded in Section 3.1 of this report, the Project screens out since it meets the *Project Type Screening* criteria as a community institution and therefore, is presumed to have a less than

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<sup>4</sup> Guidelines, Page 24-26

significant VMT impact. It is our recommendation that the project be approved with no additional project-level VMT analysis.





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Fire Station 41

Transit Priority Area Screening

Figure 3-1