October 16, 2023

Mr. Harman Dhillon
3343 Industrial Avenue, Suite 9
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Third Addendum to the *Traffic Impact Study for the Elm Tree Station Project*

Dear Mr. Dhillon;

Some time has passed since W-Trans prepared the *Traffic Impact Study for the Elm Tree Station Project*, July 26, 2013, as well as an addendum dated October 24, 2013, and a second addendum addressing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) dated July 20, 2022. We understand that the project is now going through the entitlement process and City staff have asked that the validity of our findings and recommendations from these three prior documents be reviewed. The purpose of this third addendum is to detail these prior analyses and assess whether conditions have changed sufficiently to require any updates.

Second Addendum, Analysis of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) for the Elm Tree Station Project

This second addendum, addressed to Ms. Jean Kapolchok and dated July 20, 2022, provided an evaluation of the project's potential transportation impact in terms of VMT. As concluded in the letter, the project would be considered per City policy as a local-serving retail enterprise and therefore screened out as being presumed to have a less-than-significant impact under the City's criteria. The City has not changed their policy since 2022 so this finding remains valid.

Addendum to the *Traffic Impact Study for the Elm Tree Station Project*

On October 24, 2013, this letter to Ms. Jessica Jones of the City of Santa Rosa was submitted to document concerns regarding bicyclist and pedestrian safety. It was noted that there while there were no specific safety concerns related to the project, improvements to the legends and signing were recommended. These findings and recommendations remain valid.

It is noted that the City and SCTA currently have a project underway to determine the feasibility of converting SR-12/Fulton Road-Wright Road to a grade-separated interchange, though as a first phase of the project there is a goal of improving connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists through and around the intersection. It is anticipated that conditions in the vicinity of the project site will be assessed as part of this project as well.

Traffic Impact Study for the Elm Tree Station Project, July 26, 2013

The traffic study (TIS) indicated that while the study intersection of SR-12/Fulton Road-Wright Road and Sebastopol Road/South Wright Road were operating acceptably at the time, under future volumes they were anticipated to deteriorate to unacceptable operation. Work currently being performed on the aforementioned interchange feasibility study indicates that the intersection of Sebastopol Road/South Wright Road is currently operating at LOS C, with approximately the same average delay as reported in 2013. Operation at SR-12/Fulton Road-Wright Road has deteriorated from an acceptable LOS D to an unacceptable LOS E, however. The project was expected to increase delay at SR-12/Fulton Road-Wright Road by approximately one second during both peak hours, and by about 0.1 seconds at Sebastopol Road/South Wright Road. It is reasonable to anticipate that the added volume would have a similar effect on current operation and would not cause operation of either intersection to deteriorate to an unacceptable service level. Further, the City allows a five-second increase in average delay as an acceptable effect on operation. Since the project would be expected to cause perhaps a two-second increase in delay, at most, this would still be considered an acceptable effect. Because work is currently

underway to develop plans for a grade-separated interchange at SR-12/Fulton Road-Wright Road that would presumably result in acceptable operating conditions, and as this interchange project would draw funding from the City's facilities fees, the Elm Street Station project's proportional contribution towards the cost of the improvements would be provided by payment of the required fees. It is noted that the full cost of these improvements is not expected to be covered by the facilities fees; it is more typical to use other types of funding for the majority of the cost and draw from developer fees for the City's matching funds.

The TIS noted that facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists, including the proposed new connectivity around the site to Joe Rodota Trail, would be adequate for site users, and improvements made nearby in the intervening decade have resulted in better connectivity than existed at the time. The goal of improving access across SR-12 will further enhance connectivity for these modes. The finding in the TIS therefore remains valid.

Site-specific issues evaluated, such as sight distance and circulation, would be unchanged with the passage of time, so remain valid.

The TIS recommended that appropriate traffic impact fees be paid by the applicant. The City has since transitioned to a public facilities fee that covers traffic as well as other City amenities, such as parks. These fees would be expected to cover the project's proportional share of the cost for infrastructure improvements needed to accommodate development.

Conclusion

Based on a review of the findings and recommendations contained in the original traffic study as well as the two addendums, it was determined that the findings remain valid and the recommendations are still applicable.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to provide these services. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Dalene J. Whitlock, PE, PTOE
Senior Principal

DJW/djw/SRO330.L2

Copy to: Ms. Jean Kapolchok

July 20, 2022

Ms. Jean Kapolchok
J. Kapolchok & Associates
843 Second Street
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Analysis of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) for the Elm Tree Station Project

Dear Ms. Kapolchok;

As requested, we have prepared an evaluation of the Elm Tree Station project's potential transportation impact relative to vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The purpose of this letter is to present our analysis and findings relative to the project's VMT and serves as the second addendum to the *Traffic Impact Study for the Elm Tree Station Project*, W-Trans, July 26, 2013.

Project Description

The proposed Elm Tree Station project consists of a 3,448 square-foot of community grocery store, a gasoline station with six fueling dispensers and four electric vehicle charging stations, an open space and a bicycle path, a 432 square-foot of commercial building, and a single apartment to be located on a currently vacant site on North Wright Road, between Sebastopol Road and State Route (SR) 12.

Analysis of VMT

Senate Bill (SB) 743 established use of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as the metric to be applied for determining traffic impacts associated with development projects. The City of Santa Rosa has issued guidelines for VMT analysis, as outlined in *Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Guidelines Final Draft*, dated June 5, 2020. The City's parameters are consistent with guidance provided in the publication *Transportation Impacts (SB 743) CEQA Guidelines Update and Technical Advisory*, California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), 2018. Based on Santa Rosa's *VMT Guidelines*, VMT analysis for mixed-use projects should evaluate each component independently or alternatively evaluate only the project's dominant use. Accordingly, only the commercial component of the project was evaluated as the dominant use while the single apartment unit was determined to be an incidental use as the apartment would generate only one trip during each peak hour based on the *Traffic Impact Study for the Elm Tree Station Project*.

The City of Santa Rosa's *VMT Guidelines* indicate several criteria that may be used to identify certain types of projects that are unlikely to have a significant VMT impact and can be "screened" from further analysis. One of these screening criteria pertains to local-serving retail, which is defined as having fewer than 10,000 square feet of gross floor area. The theory behind this criteria is that while a larger retail project may generate interregional trips that increase a region's total VMT, small retail establishments do not necessarily add new trips to a region, but change where existing customers shop within the region, and often shorten trip lengths. The proposed project includes 3,880 square feet of commercial space, which is well below the local-serving retail threshold of 10,000 square feet; therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the project would have a less-than-significant transportation impact on VMT.

Further consideration was given to the project type and its potential to draw traffic that is regional, versus local, in nature. Gas stations and their associated market/restaurants are inherently convenience-based uses; customers of these uses typically choose to stop because they are located along their planned route of travel and are generally unwilling to travel substantially out of their way to visit such outlets, particularly when closer options are available. In addition to those captured from North Wright Road and Sebastopol Road, the project is expected

to attract customers from drivers already passing by on SR 12; these customers would result in no new vehicle miles traveled as this would be an interim stop on a trip that was already being made.

Conclusion

Based on the City's guidelines, only the commercial portion of the project was evaluated as the dominant use of the site while the single apartment was considered an incidental use. The commercial portion of the project is classified as local-serving retail under the City's VMT screening criteria and therefore be presumed to have a less-than-significant transportation impact on VMT.

We hope this information adequately addresses the issue of VMT. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to provide these services.

Sincerely,

Jade Kim
Assistant Planner

Dalene J. Whitlock, PE, PTOE
Senior Principal

DJW/jk/SRO330-1.L1

Memorandum

Date: March 7, 2024

Project: SRO330

To: Jean Kapolchok
J. Kapolchok & Associates

From: Dalene J. Whitlock
dwhitlock@w-trans.com

Subject: Updated Trip Generation and Trip Length Information for Elm Tree Station

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As requested, and to support the analysis of greenhouse gases (GHG), we have reevaluated the proposed project's anticipated trip generation based on current rates as new data has been published since the traffic study for the project was prepared in 2013.

Project Description

The project as evaluated in the *Traffic Impact study for the Elm Tree Station Project*, July 26, 2013, included an approximately 3,500 square foot community grocery store, a gasoline station with twelve fueling positions and four electric vehicle charging stations along with an approximately one-quarter acre open space and bicycle path with a small commercial building (approximately 432 square feet). Additionally, a single apartment would be constructed on the site which is planned to be occupied by a site caretaker employee.

Trip Generation

The anticipated trip generation for the proposed project was updated using standard rates published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) in *Trip Generation Manual*, 11th Edition, 2021, for Convenience Store/Gas Station – 9-15 VFP (LU #945), and Multifamily House (Low-Rise) Not Close to Rail Transit (LU #220) as these descriptions most closely matches the proposed project.

The majority of traffic associated with both convenience store and gas station uses would be drawn from existing traffic on nearby streets. These vehicle trips are not considered "new," but are instead comprised of drivers who are already driving on the adjacent street and choose to make an interim stop. These trips are referred to as "pass-by." The percentage of these pass-by trips was based on information provided with the *Trip Generation Manual*. For the applied land use pass-by rates of 76 and 75 percent are reported for the a.m. and p.m. peak hours respectively. A rate of 75 percent was therefore applied to the daily rate.

Based on application of these assumptions, the proposed project is expected to generate an average of 2,459 trips per day at its driveway, though only 620 net new trips after the pass-by deduction is applied. These results are summarized in ~~Table~~ 1.

Table 1 – Trip Generation Summary			
Land Use	**Units**	**Daily**	
		Rate	**Trips**
Conv Store/Gas Station	3.5 ksf	700.43	2,452
Pass-by		-75%	-1,839
Multifamily Housing	1 du	6.74	7
Total New Trips			**620**

Note: ksf = 1,000 square feet; du = dwelling unit

Vehicle Miles

The Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) operates and maintains the regional travel demand model that produces traffic and VMT estimates. The most current version of the SCTM19 model, which was released in December 2021, indicates that the average trip length in the traffic analysis zone (TAZ) containing the project site is 5.67 miles.

DJW/djw/SRO330.M1