



April 21, 2026

Ms. Collette Michaud, CEO
c/o Mr. Mark Setterland
Children's Museum of Sonoma County
1835 Steele Lane
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Focused Traffic Analysis for the Children's Museum of Sonoma County Expansion

Dear Ms. Michaud;

W-Trans has prepared a focused traffic analysis for the proposed expansion of the Children's Museum of Sonoma County located at 1835 West Steele Lane in the City of Santa Rosa. The purpose of the analysis is to estimate the expected trip generation by the proposed expansion project to determine the level of traffic operational analysis required by the City of Santa Rosa. According to the Guidance for the Preparation of Traffic Operational Analysis by the City of Santa Rosa (<https://www.srcity.org/DocumentCenter/View/28939/Guidance---Traffic-Operational-Analysis->), there are two levels of traffic operational analysis: 1) Traffic Technical Operational Memorandum or 2) Traffic Operational Study. For a project expected to generate less than 250 AADT or 50 peak-hour vehicular trips on weekdays, only Traffic Technical Operational Memorandum is required. A Technical Operational Memorandum does not require Level of Service (LOS) analysis for roadways and intersections serving the project site.

Project Description

The project as proposed includes the construction of two new buildings and the removal of one existing building, resulting in a net increase of 5,712 square feet of space. Proposed uses of the expansion match existing uses and include new museum exhibit spaces, office, classrooms, and storage areas. The practical goals of the expansion project are to modestly expand indoor gallery space for new exhibits, to provide adequate administrative facilities to serve museum programs, and to accommodate small groups of children in a classroom-type setting. The expansion project is designed with the same number of visitors based on the museum's historical visitation data and is not expected to increase the number of visitors to the museum. However, the museum is expected to add three more employees once the expansion project is completed.

Existing Trip Generation

The museum's visitation data from 2025 shows that the museum currently generates an estimated 328 trips on a weekday. Staff of the museum indicates that visitors arrive with an average of four people per vehicle. This translates to an average of 82 vehicle trips per day on weekdays. Visitation data also show that the average number of visitors who arrive during a weekday traffic peak hour is 28 (8.5% of weekday total), translating to seven vehicles added to the peak hour traffic on W. Steele Lane. Visitor attendance information from 2025 is enclosed.

Depending on the season (peak or off-peak months), the museum currently employs between 25 and 35 full-time and part-time employees. Not all staff are on site at the same time, and museum reports that since many employees ride bicycles or take transit to work that there is typically a maximum of 16 vehicles on site at one time. Conservatively assuming these 16 vehicle trips all arrive and leave the museum during traffic peak hours, currently the museum generates an average of 98 daily trips on a weekday, including 23 trips during the weekday peak periods.

Project Trip Generation

Based on the anticipated uses of the expanded museum space, the project is not anticipated to result in an increase in visitation, and is therefore not expected to generate new visitor vehicle trips. Up to three additional employees are to be added to the staff after the expansion is completed. Assuming that these three employees all drive alone to work during peak periods, the project is expected to add six vehicle trips per day. Therefore, the project is well below the City's threshold for a Traffic Operational Study.

Vehicle Miles Traveled

Under guidance provided by the City of Santa Rosa's *Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Guidelines, 2020*, several criteria are identified that may be used to identify certain types of projects that are unlikely to have a VMT impact and can be "screened" from further VMT analysis. One of the criteria states that projects generating fewer than 110 trips per day are considered small projects, for which a quantitative analysis is not required. Since the project is estimated to generate only six daily trips on average it meets this criteria and the VMT impact would be less than significant.

Access and Circulation

The Children's Museum of Sonoma County is located on the north side of W. Steele Lane between Coffey Lane and Range Ave, neighboring the Charles M. Shultz Museum to the east. W. Steele Lane is a two-lane street classified as a major collector by Caltrans. The speed limit on W. Steele Lane between Coffey Lane and Range Ave is 30 MPH. According to traffic count data from the City of Santa Rosa (<https://www.srcity.org/DocumentCenter/Index/914>), W. Steele Lane between Coffey Lane and Range Ave has a 10,932 AADT (5,455 EB and 5,477 WB). AM peak hour volume is 743 occurring at 8:00 am and PM peak volume is 930 at 5:00 pm.

The proposed project would rely on the same access and onsite circulation that serves the existing museum. Access would remain unchanged and the project would result in a nominal increase to driveway volumes.

There are sidewalks and marked bike paths on both sides of W. Steele Lane, and the project is located a short distance from the SMART multi-use path, which provides access to downtown Santa Rosa. Stripped spaces for roadside parking are located on the south side of W. Steele Lane between Coffey Lane and Hardies Lane (to the west of Range Ave). The museum can be accessed by Santa Rosa CityBus Routes 6 and 10 via bus stops at W. Steele Ln. and Heidi Pl located within 500 feet of the museum, Routes 1 and 15 via Coddington Transit Hub located within 0.5 miles of the museum on Range Avenue, and the SMART train at the Santa Rosa North station. Therefore the site is adequately served by existing pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities.

Parking

As noted, based on proximity to the Santa Rosa North SMART station, the project is not required to meet the City's minimum parking requirements, therefore the following discussion is for informational purposes. The existing on-site parking lot provides 80 paved and stripped parking spaces; however, adjacent to the paved parking lot, the museum also reserves an area of land paved with gravels that can park up to 40 vehicles, resulting in a total parking supply of 120 vehicles. Further, there is an existing pedestrian pathway connection from the project site to the adjacent Charles M. Schulz Museum parking lot. The Charles M. Schulz Museum parking lot currently provides 122 parking spaces, while the Charles M Schulz Ice Arena located further east provides 145 parking spaces.

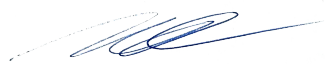
The project would add three new employees, and conservatively assuming that they would all drive alone to the site, they would require an additional three parking spaces, which would have a nominal impact.

Since the Children’s Museum occasionally hosts events that may exceed their on-site parking supply, Children’s Museum and the Schulz Museum have an informal arrangement allowing event attendees at the Children’s Museum to use the Schulz Museum lot for overflow parking. The two entities coordinate with one another to ensure that they are both not hosting events on the same day.

Conclusions

- The project would not be expected to generate new visitor trips, but it is anticipated that up to three additional staff would be hired. The new employees would generate an average of six trips per day.
- The project would have a less-than-significant impact on vehicle miles traveled.
- Site access is anticipated to function acceptably, and the project would be adequately served by the surrounding pedestrian, bicycle, and transit networks.
- The project is exempt from the City’s minimum parking requirements, but is expected to have a nominal impact on parking demand.

Thank you for giving W-Trans the opportunity to provide these services. Please call if you have any questions.



Ming Lee
Associate Engineer


Barry Bergman, AICP
Senior Planner

Mark E. Spencer, PE (Traffic)
Senior Principal



Table I Existing Number of Museum Visitors and Estimated Number of Vehicle Trips Generated

Month	Average Daily Number of Visitors						Average Daily Number of Vehicular Trips					
	Weekend			Weekday			Weekend			Weekday		
	Non-Peak Hours	Peak Hours	Total	Non-Peak Hours	Peak Hours	Total	Non-Peak Hours	Peak Hours	Total	Non-Peak Hours	Peak Hours	Total
January	335	790	1,125	90	215	305	84	198	282	23	54	77
February	300	700	1,000	105	245	350	75	175	250	26	61	88
March	300	700	1,000	130	300	430	75	175	250	33	75	108
April	300	700	1,000	95	225	320	75	175	250	24	56	80
May	270	625	895	80	195	275	68	156	224	20	49	69
June	335	790	1,125	95	225	320	84	198	282	24	56	80
July	375	875	1,250	110	255	365	94	219	313	28	64	91
August	270	630	900	115	265	380	68	158	226	29	66	95
September	300	700	1,000	80	195	275	75	175	250	20	49	69
October	300	700	1,000	80	195	275	75	175	250	20	49	69
November	270	630	900	110	255	365	68	158	226	28	64	91
December	300	700	1,000	80	195	275	75	175	250	20	49	69
Daily Average	305	712	1,017	98	230	328	76	178	254	24	58	82
Hourly Average (Daily average/3.5)	87	203	290	28	66	94	22	51	73	7	16	23

Non-Peak Visitation Hours 9:00-10:30 AM; 2:00-4:00 PM

Peak Visitation Hours 10:30 AM-2:00 PM