

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

<p>(1) DEPARTMENT Planning and Building & Public Works</p>	<p>(2) MEETING DATE 7/19/2016</p>	<p>(3) CONTACT/PHONE Sara Sanders, Planner III / (805)781-1397 Jeremy Ghent PE, Transportation Division Manager / (805) 781-1406</p>	
<p>(4) SUBJECT Receive and file a joint staff presentation by Planning and Building and Public Works on findings of the transportation evaluation and the 2015 Avila Circulation Study, and provide staff with direction on Avila Beach traffic methodology, capacity allocation and road improvements. District 3.</p>			
<p>(5) RECOMMENDED ACTION It is recommended that the Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Direct Planning and Building staff to remove language pertaining to the second week of May traffic methodology from San Luis Bay Area Plan as a part of the Avila Beach Community Plan Update process. 2. Direct Public Works to identify a department-based procedure on traffic methodology for the Community of Avila Beach. 3. Direct staff to require all Environmental Impact Reports to evaluate both the traffic impacts during the second week in May and during the most appropriate time relative to the proposed land use as an interim approach until the Avila Beach Community Plan Update is finalized. 			
<p>(6) FUNDING SOURCE(S): General Fund support</p>	<p>(7) CURRENT YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00</p>	<p>(8) ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00</p>	<p>(9) BUDGETED? Yes</p>
<p>(10) AGENDA PLACEMENT <input type="checkbox"/> Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing (Time Est. ___) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board Business (Time Est. <u>150 min</u>)</p>			
<p>(11) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS <input type="checkbox"/> Resolutions <input type="checkbox"/> Contracts <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinances <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A</p>			
<p>(12) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR): N/A</p>		<p>(13) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUIRED? BAR ID Number: <input type="checkbox"/> 4/5 Vote Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A</p>	
<p>(14) LOCATION MAP N/A</p>	<p>(15) BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT? N/A</p>	<p>(16) AGENDA ITEM HISTORY <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Date: <u>10/13/15, 3/8/16, 6/13/16</u></p>	
<p>(17) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW Lisa M. Howe</p>			
<p>(18) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) District 3</p>			

County of San Luis Obispo



TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Sara Sanders, Planner III, Planning and Building Department
Jeremy Ghent PE, Transportation Division Manager, Public Works

VIA: Trevor Keith, Deputy Director, Planning and Building Department
Dave Flynn, Deputy Director, Public Works

DATE: 7/19/2016

SUBJECT: Receive and file a joint staff presentation by Public Works and Planning and Building on findings of the transportation evaluation and the 2015 Avila Circulation Study, and provide staff with direction on Avila Beach traffic methodology, capacity allocation and road improvements. District 3.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Direct Planning and Building staff to remove language pertaining to the second week of May traffic methodology from San Luis Bay Area Plan as a part of the Avila Beach Community Plan Update process.
2. Direct Public Works to identify a department-based procedure on traffic methodology for the Community of Avila Beach.
3. Direct staff to require all Environmental Impact Reports to evaluate both the traffic impacts during the second week in May and during the most appropriate time relative to the proposed land use as an interim approach until the Avila Beach Community Plan Update is finalized.

DISCUSSION

Background

On October 13, 2015, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to evaluate the traffic policies, programs and standards contained in the San Luis Bay Area Plan, of which were originally established by Ordinance No. 2702 on December 12, 1994. The discussion on October 13, 2015 focused on traffic methodology and roadway capacity and resulted in a motion, "to pursue a resource capacity survey of traffic for Avila Beach as they move forward with the Avila Community Plan update." During this same time period, Public Works was in the process of updating the circulation study for Avila Beach. As stated in the County's Framework for Planning, "(circulation) studies will be updated regularly to reflect changes in circulation and thus may be used as a resource capacity studies" (3-20). To avoid duplication and increase efficiency, the Planning & Building Department and Public Works coordinated extensively and combined efforts wherein the Planning & Building focused on policies, programs and standards and Public Works focused on the circulation study update, which is the functional equivalent to a resource capacity study. This staff report summarizes the combined findings of each of these efforts.

Circulation Studies – Road Improvement Fee Program

Beginning in 1990, a Road Improvement Fee program was established under an adopted Circulation Study. In the early 1990s, the primary concern for the Avila Valley Advisory Council (AVAC) was the amount of commuter traffic created by Diablo Canyon. There were three studies published on traffic in Avila Beach alluding to the need to increase the width of Avila Beach Drive to improve traffic congestion in the area. At the time, this finding was not supported by the community or Board so staff was directed to look at non-summer weekday traffic to avoid the need for road widening. Non-summer weekday traffic was said to be more representative of day-to-day traffic conditions. The second week in May was chosen because at the time of the three studies the second week of May had the most non-summer traffic which would eliminate the need to widen Avila Beach Drive.

Ordinance No. 2702 and the “2nd Week in May” Methodology

Ordinance No. 2702 amended various sections of the San Luis Bay Area Plan (Coastal) with the goal of providing an equitable framework for managing traffic capacity of Avila Beach and San Luis Bay Drives. A standard in the ordinance requires traffic studies in the Avila Beach area to collect vehicle counts during the second week in May. Development of this standard was based on results from an *Avila Beach Drive Resource Capacity Study* (Wilbur Smith Associates, September 1992). The methodology is not consistent with current engineering practices and is the only one of its kind in the county. The policies and standards of Ordinance No. 2702 have been in place for over twenty years, and the area served by these roadways has undergone a number of significant changes since time of adoption. Staff evaluated the programs and standards set forth by Ordinance No. 2702 with the goal of informing the public, stakeholders and decision-makers about its various provisions, and to determine whether they remain relevant in 2016.

The attached Avila Beach Drive Capacity Study by Omni-Means Inc. provides an analysis of existing traffic counts and level of service throughout the season from May until September. Avila Beach Drive traffic demand being influence by:

1. Daily commute patterns; based on Diablo Canyon and the existing land use plan
2. Recreational traffic; seasonal
3. Event traffic; increasing frequency
4. Future land use zoning; proposed General Plan Amendments such as Avila Bluff properties

2015 Avila Circulation Study Summary

As stated in the 2015 Avila Circulation Study, traffic operations are quantified through the determination of "Level of Service" (LOS). Level of Service is a qualitative measure of traffic operating conditions, whereby a letter grade "A" through "F" is assigned to an intersection or roadway segment representing progressively worsening traffic conditions. The following table describes the type of flow and delay associated with each level. More information on LOS can be found in Attachment 2: 2015 Circulation Study page 23.

LEVEL OF SERVICE	TYPE OF FLOW	DELAY
A	Stable Flow	Very slight delay. Progression is very favorable, with most vehicles arriving during the green phase not stopping at all.
B	Stable Flow	Good progression and/or short cycle lengths. More vehicles stop than for LOS A, causing higher levels of average delay.
C	Stable Flow	Higher delays resulting from fair progression and/or longer cycle lengths. Individual cycle failures may begin to appear at this level. The number of vehicles stopping is significant, although many still pass through the intersection without stopping.
D	Approaching Unstable Flow	The influence of congestion becomes more noticeable. Longer delays may result from some combination of unfavorable progression, long cycle lengths, or high volume-to-capacity ratios. Many vehicles stop, and the

		proportion of vehicles not stopping declines. Individual cycle failures are noticeable.
E	Unstable Flow	Generally considered to be the limit of acceptable delay. Indicative of poor progression, long cycle lengths, and high volume-to-capacity ratios. Individual cycle failures are frequent occurrences.
F	Forced Flow	Generally considered to be unacceptable to most drivers. Often occurs with over saturation. May also occur at high volume to capacity ratios. There are many individual cycle failures. Poor progression and long cycle lengths may also be major contributing factors.

The 2015 Avila Circulation Study has identified six transportation infrastructure projects that would be necessary to achieve an adequate LOS at buildout under the existing traffic measurement methodology (second week in May methodology, as described above). Those six necessary projects are;

- Improvements to Avila Beach Dr. Interchange,
- Signalize Avila Beach Drive at Ontario Road,
- Signalize Avila Beach Drive at San Luis Street,
- Signalize Avila Beach Drive at San Miguel Street,
- Improvements to San Luis Bay Drive Interchange
- Add eastbound lane to provide capacity on Avila Beach Drive between San Luis Street and San Luis Bay Drive.

It is important to note that level of service for the corridor is ultimately determined by the capacity of the signalized intersections and the level of service which can be provided at these points. The addition of an eastbound lane was warranted based on traffic volumes which exceeded the Area standard for the second week in May in 2014.

The current study analyzes traffic in accordance with the current San Luis Bay Area Plan. Using the 3-day 3-hour average peak hour in the second week of May (Average for Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 3pm to 6pm). This adopted methodology was implemented to approximate background commuter demands for industrial, business, and residential traffic. While this methodology likely satisfies that intended metric, the methodology avoids much of the peak traffic demand experienced during recreational and event traffic that continues to impact the community. Removing the traffic measurement methodology from the Area Plan would allow flexibility in considering these seasonal and event traffic demands and better reflect actual traffic conditions experienced by the community.

Key Findings of the Traffic Evaluation

The Traffic Evaluation has identified three key findings. These findings are listed with a brief discussion below.

1. The "2nd Week in May" methodology, as contained in the San Luis Bay Area Plan, was reverse-engineered to ensure LOS C was achieved at buildout and would not be exceeded.
 - Over 20 years later, this methodology does not accurately reflect the deficient level of service that the community currently experiences. As result, both Public Works and the Planning & Building Department are recommending removal of this methodology from the San Luis Bay Area Plan.
2. The intent of the 2nd week in May methodology was to ensure that Avila Beach Drive would maintain a LOS C at buildout of the Community Plan (2035). However, according to the 2015 Avila Beach Circulation Study, traffic circulation along Avila Beach Drive would degrade from LOS C to LOS D at buildout of the current Community Plan.
 - Since LOS D is achieved at buildout, there is a need for additional capital improvements in the community to maintain LOS C as required in the San Luis Bay Area Plan standard. These recommended improvements include interchange enhancements, additional traffic signals, widening Avila Beach Drive between San Luis Street and San Luis Bay Drive to two eastbound lanes, and transportation demand management strategies. More discussion of these improvements can be found

in the attached 2015 Avila Circulation Study. The findings of the circulation study further support Public Works and the Planning & Building Department recommendation to remove of this methodology from the San Luis Bay Area Plan.

3. As a result of Ordinance No. 2702, the San Luis Bay Area Plan contains both a standard and a program that mention reserving a “portion” of road capacity for coastal dependent uses. The standard does not provide a percentage; however, the non-mandatory program mentions reserving "25% roadway capacity." This program will be difficult to implement and will not resolve the current traffic congestion problems in Avila Beach.
 - Ordinance No. 2702 includes the following capacity allocation program,

Resource Capacity - Avila Beach Drive. When annual traffic counts indicate that remaining excess capacity has declined to 25 percent of the LOS "C" ranges, the Board of Supervisors should be notified according to the procedures of the Resource Management System, and be asked to consider the allocation of the remaining capacity among coastal-dependent, coastal-related and other development."

During the October 13th Board of Supervisor discussion, the capacity allocation program was discussed and subsequently analyzed in traffic evaluation. This program has not been implemented to date nor is it mandatory that the County do so. There are a number of reasons that would make it difficult to implement. These reasons include:

- In 2014, Avila Beach Drive reached 25% capacity of LOS C which means if the program is implemented, there will not be any new development unless it is a coastal dependent use. The only development that would be allowed to occur is coastal dependent, which would likely include only Port San Luis Harbor District related uses. All general residential, commercial and other non-coastal dependent land uses would not be allowed unless overriding findings for approval could be made.
- Similar examples of program implementation are sparse.
- The current program is missing a time frame that triggers the capacity allocation. For example, would one year or consecutive years trigger the program? Traffic counts indicated that capacity had declined to 25% of LOS in 2014 but that was not the case in 2015 or 2016.

Community Outreach

Community Meetings

Staff has engaged in extensive community outreach since the traffic evaluation effort began. A subcommittee of AVAC was created to meet with staff on a regular basis. Both Planning and Building and Public Works staff have held five monthly AVAC Traffic Subcommittee meetings to discuss progress on the evaluation and receive feedback. Staff also presented during the May AVAC meeting to over eighty community members. These efforts have provided staff and the community with a working dialog on current traffic conditions.

Online Survey

Staff wanted to expand outreach efforts and provide stakeholders with an additional opportunity to participate in the Traffic Evaluation. In order to gather information, staff created and released a four question online survey, the results of which would provide only an initial assessment of options. Further outreach is warranted, through the annual Road Improvement Fee program and Community Plan Update process to ascertain a final direction. The intent of the informal traffic survey was for staff to receive preliminary feedback on traffic issues in the community¹

¹ On May 18th, 2016, staff distributed the informal survey to the AVAC, Avila Beach Civic Association, and the Concerned Citizens Group through the platform, Survey Monkey. Polling ended June 3, 2016. Staff received 188 responses, 90 percent of those were residents of the Avila Beach area.

Staff asked respondents to rank the most important traffic issue facing the Avila Beach area from seven options. There was an “other” option that allowed the respondent to provide an additional answer. From the question, the following information was collected:

- The top three traffic issues cited by respondents were: emergency access, beach traffic (especially during the summer and on weekends), and traffic associated with special events.
- Of the 68 respondents that provided an additional answer, 33 percent mentioned parking as an important traffic issue facing Avila Beach.
- Residents were not as concerned with commuter traffic. Sixty-three percent of the respondents ranked commuter traffic either fifth or sixth out of the seven options.

Options to Address Traffic Issues in Avila Beach

As discussed above, Ordinance No. 2702 created a standard that specifies the traffic methodology and capacity allocation for Avila Beach. The standard as contained in the San Luis Bay Area Plan states:

“Reserve a portion of the Avila Beach Drive road capacity to serve coastal dependent uses and do not subject Avila Beach Drive to traffic levels exceeding Level of Service (LOS) “C” overall. The LOS for Avila Beach Drive and San Luis Bay Drive shall be based on the average hourly weekday two-way 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. traffic counts to be conducted during the second week in May of each year.”

Staff is recommending that any changes to the San Luis Bay Area Plan be completed as a part of the Community Plan Update process. Nonetheless, staff needs direction on how to address the standard. Below, the first two sentences of the area standard are broken out with possible actions and implications.

A. *“Reserve a portion of the Avila Beach Drive road capacity to serve coastal dependent uses and do not subject Avila Beach Drive to traffic levels exceeding Level of Service (LOS) “C” overall.”*

- If the language is kept as is:
 - Need to decide on a percentage to allocate to coastal dependent uses. This could be explored during the Community Plan Update.
 - Need to create a process to determine allocation requirement.
 - Additional capital improvements will be required to maintain LOS C.
- If the language is removed from the San Luis Bay Area Plan:
 - Coastal dependent uses will not have reserved roadway capacity. This might hinder Port activities and development as well as affect beach access.
 - Need to establish a LOS threshold. For example, the standard can be adjusted from LOS C to LOS D which is consistent with both County and Caltrans policies. Decreasing the level of service to LOS D would allow for an increase in the accepted amount of traffic delay. This would also decrease the immediate need for a larger capital improvement project.
- If the language is amended:
 - Could change the LOS threshold from LOS C to LOS D to remove the need for a capital improvement project.
 - Could implement current resource capacity program in the San Luis Bay Area Plan. This program states,

“Resource Capacity - Avila Beach Drive. When annual traffic counts indicate that remaining excess capacity has declined to 25 percent of the LOS “C” ranges, the Board of Supervisors should be notified according to the procedures of the Resource Management System, and be asked to consider the allocation of the remaining capacity among coastal-dependent, coastal-related and other development.”

Implementing this program would still require staff to create a mechanism for allocating roadway capacity. As stated earlier, this program provides implementation challenges such as: if May

counts indicate capacity is less than 25% of LOS C, than non-coastal dependent development would not take place limiting building potential for property owners, etc.

- Could amend to keep LOS C standard but remove the roadway capacity allocation language or vice versa.

B. *“The LOS for Avila Beach Drive and San Luis Bay Drive shall be based on the average hourly weekday two-way 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. traffic counts to be conducted during the second week in May of each year.”*

- If the language is kept as is:
 - Traffic conditions will be at LOS D by 2035 as stated in the 2015 Circulation Study requiring a capital improvement project.
 - The methodology does not address the summer weekend traffic.
 - May result in an under-counting of traffic when used on future projects.
 - Traffic in May fluctuates substantially year to year creating uncertainty as to specific improvements are needed.
- If the language is removed from the San Luis Bay Area Plan:
 - Need to decide on the most appropriate methodology. There are two types of methodology: methodology based on a specific capital project similar to the reverse engineering of twenty years ago or methodology regardless of outcome.
 - Depending on the chosen methodology, there will be additional capital improvements required to add capacity to Avila Beach Drive. Since fees to build these projects have not been collected for the past twenty years, the County will be in a significant and immediate funding deficit for needed roadway improvements.
- If the language is amended:
 - Have Public Works return to the Board after analyzing:
 - A Statistical Based Methodology (Such as K30 or K100) (See Attachment 4)
 - Using Average Summer Weekday Peak Hour Traffic (M-F) June July August (See Attachment 3, Figure 6)
 - Modification of Level of Service Threshold to LOS D or E for Summer Months
 - Using Intersection Approach LOS instead of Roadway Segment LOS as recommended by Omni-Means

Next Steps

Recommendation No. 1: Direct Planning and Building staff to remove language pertaining to the second week of May traffic methodology from San Luis Bay Area Plan as a part of the Avila Beach Community Plan Update process.

On October 13, 2015, the Board also prioritized and directed the Planning & Building Department to update the Avila Beach Community Plan. On June 13, 2016, the Board further committed to this effort by approved a Budget Allocation Request of \$850,000 to fund the update. Since the Board has prioritized the update, both Public Works and the Planning & Building Department are recommending that any changes to the San Luis Bay Area Plan and associated roadway improvements are completed during the Avila Beach Community Plan update to maximize efficiency and ensure that the update is well planned. That the update include removal of the second week of May traffic methodology from the San Luis Bay Area Plan.

Recommendation No. 2: Direct Public Works to identify a department-based procedure on traffic methodology for the Community of Avila Beach.

As stated earlier, the 2015 Avila Circulation Study has identified six transportation infrastructure projects that would be necessary to achieve an adequate Level of Service (LOS) at buildout under the existing “2nd Week in May” traffic measurement methodology. Including the summer demands on the community’s transportation infrastructure in future studies will likely result in increased/expanded capital improvement projects. Under the provisions of the Fee Program established in Government Code 66000 there would be limited ability to recoup

these costs through developer fees. A change in the program metric would likely be considered an existing deficiency and would only provide for limited fees in accordance with the rough proportionality rules as established. This existing deficiency would create a funding gap that would require other funding sources in order to implement the expanded Capital Improvement Program. Once direction is provided by your Board, Public Works will return with the formal action of adopting the update on the Road Improvement Fee program.

Recommendation No. 3: Direct staff to require all Environmental Impact Reports to evaluate both the traffic impacts during the second week in May and during the most appropriate time relative to the proposed land use as an interim approach until the Avila Beach Community Plan Update is finalized.

Since the Community Plan Update is projected to take 3-5 years, the community is concerned with the impact of new development traffic. Any development in the community that is proposed is subject to the current general plan standards using the "2nd week in May" methodology. Traffic created by proposed development will be studied during that time period as opposed to looking at the reasonable worst case relative to the proposed land use. In the meantime, the Board should require all Environmental Impact Reports to evaluate both the traffic impacts during the second week in May and during the most appropriate time relative to the proposed land use as an interim approach until the Avila Beach Community Plan Update is finalized.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Planning and Building and Public Works have worked together throughout the process. Since January, staff from both departments have met with members of the AVAC Traffic Subcommittee five times and presented at the May 2016 AVAC Meeting to over eighty community members. Staff has also worked with legal counsel and has held four meetings in the last five months.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Based on Board direction, if the San Luis Bay Area Plan standard is amended, it would be completed pursuant to the Avila Beach Community Plan Update of which the County has already allocated funding for and directed Planning & Building to initiate the update process.

If after further evaluation by Public Works it is determined that additional capacity would be for roadways in Avila Beach, it may result in an increase from the current level of approximately \$5,500 per peak hour trip to a higher value that is to be determined based on roadway improvement needed. In addition, regional funding may be required to address demand of recreational trips.

RESULTS

If staff's recommendation is approved, language pertaining to the second week of May traffic methodology from San Luis Bay Area Plan would be removed as a part of the Avila Beach Community Plan Update process, Public Works would identify a department-based procedure on traffic methodology for Avila Beach area and return to the Board at a later time, and all Environmental Impact Reports would evaluate both the traffic impacts during the second week in May to ensure the County complies with its own current standards and during the most appropriate time relative to the proposed land use as an interim approach until the Avila Beach Community Plan Update is finalized. These actions would be consistent with the County's goal of promoting a healthy, livable and prosperous community.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Analysis of Traffic Management Strategies prepared by Di Leo & Moran
2. 2015 Circulation Study prepared by Omni Means
3. Avila Beach Drive Capacity Study Memo by Omni Means
4. Highest Hour distribution plot for Avila Beach Drive