

VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED STUDY
PTS # (657591)

HOME DEPOT AND SCOTTISH RITE CENTER

City of San Diego, California
November 19, 2020

LLG Ref. 3-20-3270



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HOME DEPOT AND SCOTTISH RITE CENTER

San Diego, California
November 19, 2020

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Linscott, Law & Greenspan, Engineers (LLG) has prepared this Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) study to determine the VMT impacts for the Home Depot and Scottish Rite Center Project, consistent with the City of San Diego's *Transportation Study Manual (TSM)*, September 2020. The Project site is located on the south side of Camino del Rio South between Mission Center Road and Texas Street where the existing Scottish Rite Center and a car dealership are located.

The Project site is a part of the Mission Valley Community Plan Update (MVCPU) Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) (Project No. 518009/SCH No. 2017071066). The MVCPU PEIR was approved on September 10, 2019 and analyzed an update to the Community Plan that guides development of the entire Mission Valley Community Plan Area.

Analysis of this Project's traffic impacts tiers off the traffic analysis in the PEIR. As disclosed in the concurrently prepared Transportation Impact Analysis report, the Project is consistent with the analysis identified in the approved MVCPU PEIR. Consistent with the City of San Diego's *Transportation Study Manual (TSM)*, September 2020, for a Project within the scope of the PEIR, the following VMT study was prepared.

This study includes the following:

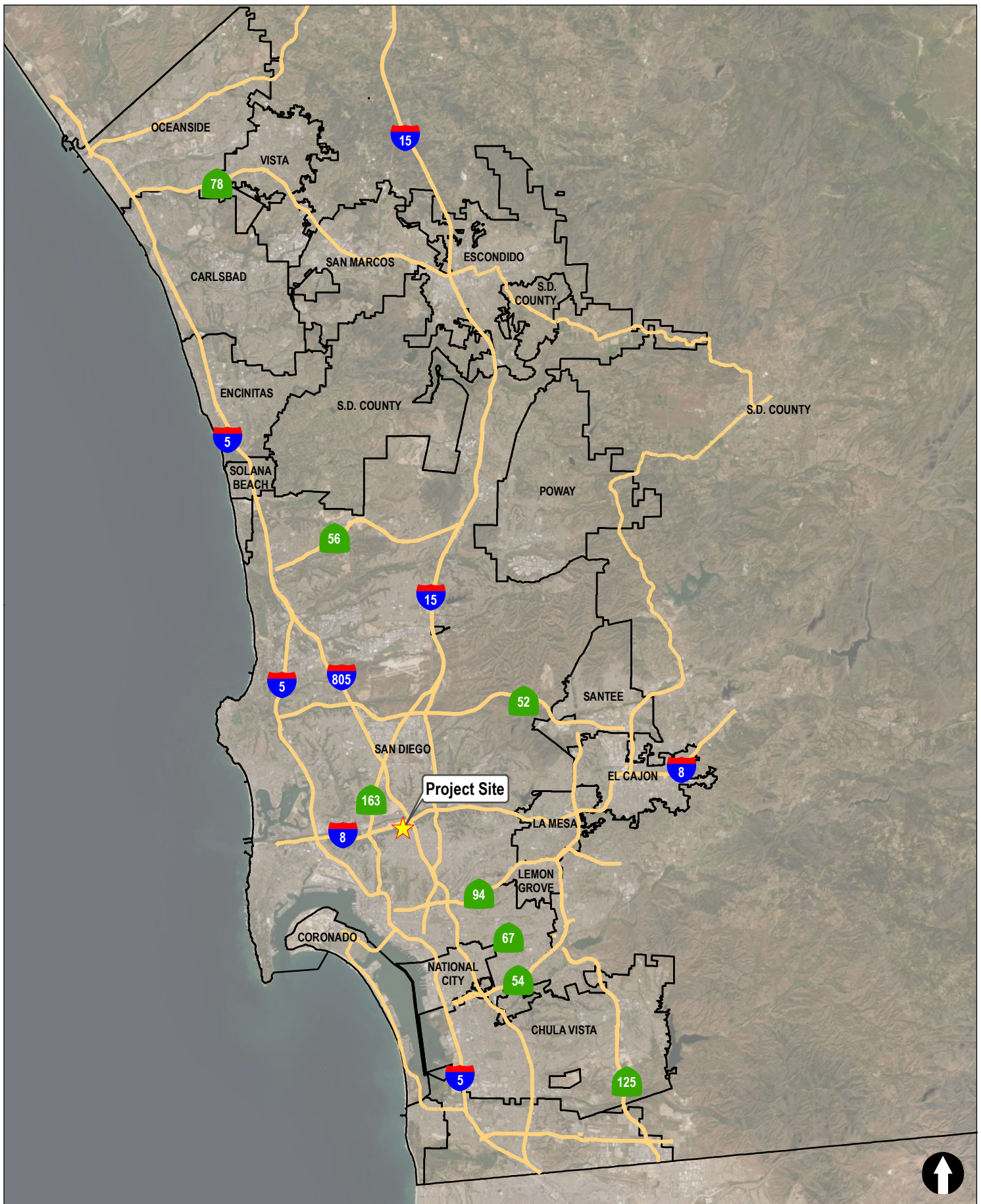
- Project Description
- Vehicle Miles Traveled: Overview and Background
- VMT Significance Criteria and Methodology
- VMT Analysis
- Conclusions

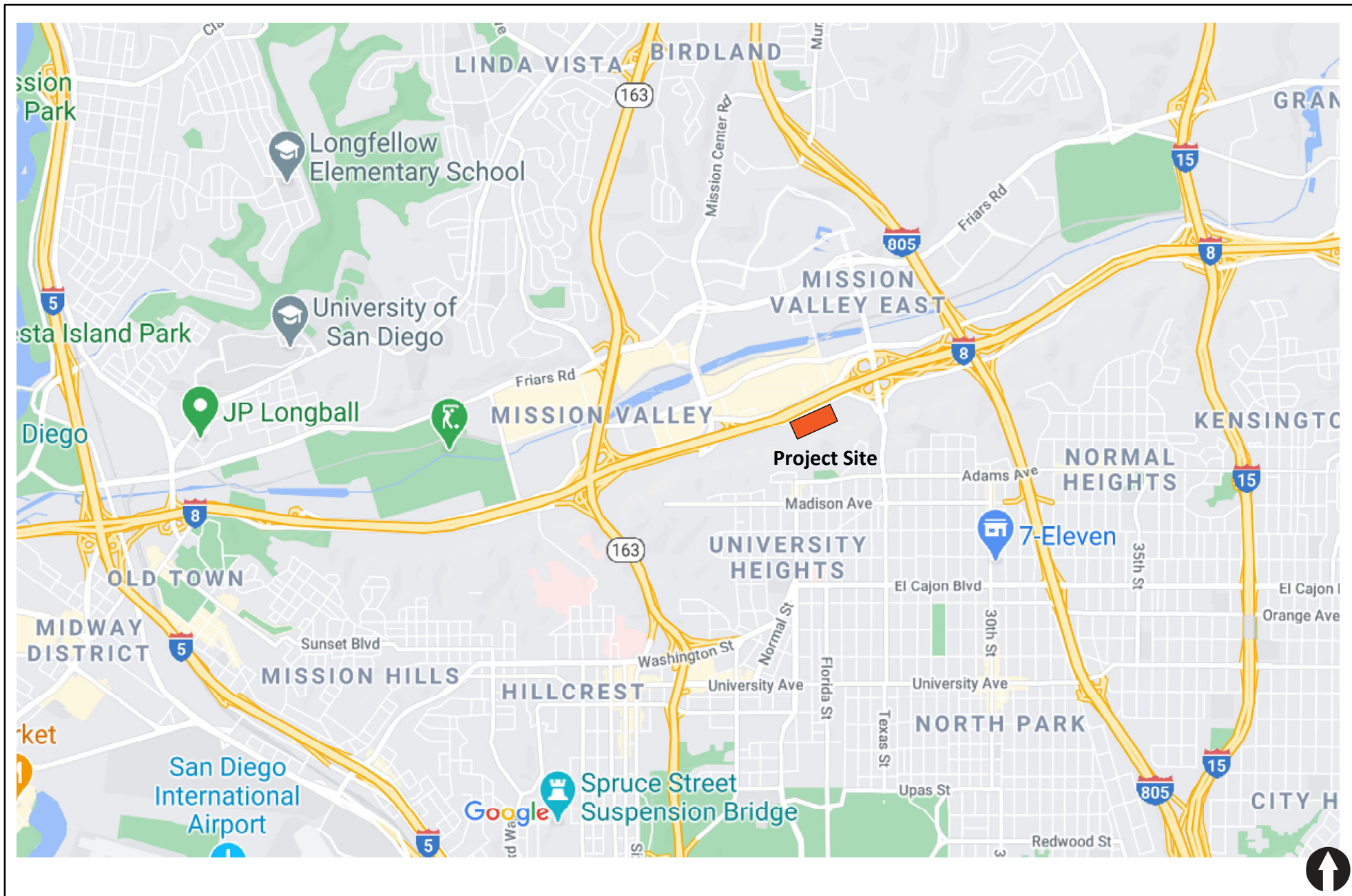
2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Home Depot and Scottish Rite Center project site is located on the south side of Camino del Rio South between Mission Center Road and Texas Street where the existing Scottish Rite Center and a car dealership are located.

The Project proposes to redevelop the site, which currently includes the existing 63,882 SF (square foot) Scottish Rite Center and 7,142 SF of auto-dealership land uses, with a 40,000 SF Scottish Rite Center and a 126,932 SF Home Depot (including a 106,688 SF home improvement center and a 20,244 SF garden center). The 18.33-acre site is in the CPIOZ-A, CR-2-1 Zone within the Mission Valley Community Plan Area. The Project proposes commercial uses and therefore is consistent with the underlying land uses analyzed for the site in the Mission Valley Community Plan Update (MVCPU). The Project's discretionary actions include a Site Development Permit and a right-of-way vacation.

Figure 2-1 shows the vicinity map. **Figure 2-2** shows a more detailed Project area map. **Figure 2-3** depicts the conceptual site plan.





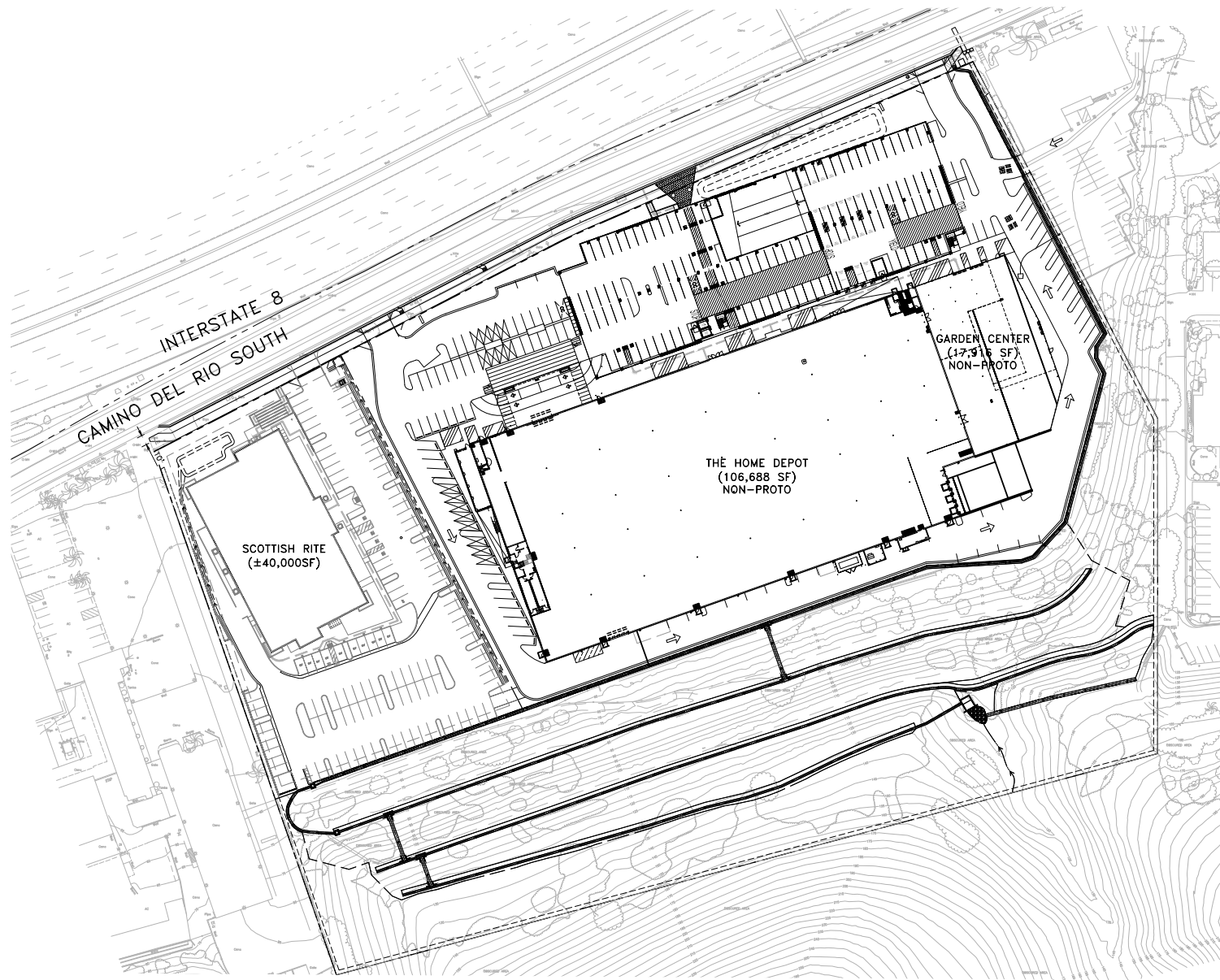


Figure 2-3

Conceptual Site Plan

HOME DEPOT AND SCOTTISH RITE CENTER

3.0 VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED: OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND

This section presents an evaluation of potential VMT impacts of the Project generally consistent with the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research's (OPR) efforts to implement California State Law Senate Bill (S.B.) 743.

3.1 VMT Background

VMT is a measurement of miles traveled by vehicles within a specified region and for a specified time period. VMT measures the efficiency of the transportation network. VMT is calculated based on individual vehicle trips generated and their associated trip lengths. VMT accounts for two-way (round trip) travel and is usually estimated for a typical weekday to measure transportation impacts.

3.2 Senate Bill 743

In September 2013, the Governor signed SB 743 into law, starting a process that fundamentally changes the way transportation impact analysis is conducted under CEQA. These changes include the elimination of auto delay, level of service (LOS), and similar measurements of vehicular roadway capacity and traffic congestion as the basis for determining significant impacts. The guidance identifies VMT as the most appropriate CEQA transportation metric, along with the elimination of auto delay/LOS for CEQA purposes statewide. The rationale for this paradigm shift is that auto delay/LOS impacts lead to improvements that increase roadway capacity and therefore induce more traffic and greenhouse gas emissions.

In December 2018, after over five years of stakeholder-driven development, the California Natural Resources Agency certified and adopted the CEQA Statute. Per the CEQA Statute, a lead agency may elect to be governed by the VMT guidelines immediately. However, as of July 1, 2020, VMT applies statewide.

4.0 VMT SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA & METHODOLOGY

4.1 Local / Regional Agency Transition to SB743

San Diego's local Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) SB 743 Subcommittee published *Guidelines for Transportation Impact Studies in the San Diego Region* in May 2020. The City of San Diego published a Transportation Study Manual (TSM) in September 2020 that provides significance determination thresholds for VMT and VMT analysis methodologies. The City's TSM was utilized as the basis for the VMT analysis.

4.2 VMT CEQA Significance Determination Thresholds

According to the City of San Diego's TSM, the transportation VMT thresholds of significance are shown in **Table 4-1**.

TABLE 4-1
VMT SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

Land Use Type ¹	Thresholds for Determination of a Significant Transportation VMT Impact ²
Residential	15% below regional average ³ resident VMT/Capita
Commercial Employment	15% below regional average ³ employee VMT/Employee
Industrial Employment	Regional average ³ employee VMT/Employee
Regional Retail	Zero net increase in total regional VMT ³
Hotel	See Commercial Employment
Regional Recreational	See Regional Retail
Regional Public Facilities	See Regional Retail
Mixed-Use	Analyze each land use individually per above categories
Redevelopment	Apply the relevant threshold based on proposed land use (ignore the existing land use)
Transportation Projects	Zero net increase in total regional VMT ³

Footnotes:

Source: City TSM Table 3 (September 2020)

1. See Appendix B of the TSM for specific land use designations.
2. Projects that exceed these thresholds would have a significant impact.
3. The regional average and total regional VMT are determined using the SANDAG Regional Travel Demand Model.

4.3 VMT Analysis Methodology

The technical approach for the Project is broken into the following two components.

- Screening Criteria
- SANDAG Model Regional Travel Demand Model

4.3.1 Screening Criteria

According to the *TSM*, a project that meets at least one of the following screening criteria would be presumed to have a less than significant VMT impact due to project characteristics and/or location.

1. **Residential or Commercial Project Located in a VMT Efficient Area:** The project is a residential or commercial employment project located in a VMT efficient area (15% or more below the base year average household VMT/capita or VMT/employee) based on the applicable location-based screening map produced by SANDAG.
2. **Industrial or Agricultural Project Located in a VMT Efficient Area:** The project is an industrial employment project located in VMT efficient area (in an area with average or below average base year VMT/employee) based on the applicable location-based screening map produced by SANDAG.
3. **Small Project:** The project is a small project defined as generating less than 300 daily unadjusted driveway trips using the City of San Diego trip generation rates/procedures.
4. **Locally Serving Retail/Recreational Project:** The project is a locally serving retail/recreational project defined as having 100,000 square feet gross floor area or less **and** demonstrates through a market area study that the market capture area for the project is approximately three miles (or less) and serves a population of roughly 25,000 people or less. Locally serving retail is consistent with the definitions of Neighborhood Shopping Center in the San Diego Municipal Code Land Development Code Trip Generation Manual. Locally serving recreation is consistent with the land uses listed in Appendix B of the *TSM*, given that it meets the square footage and market capture area above. Adding retail/recreation square footage (even if it is 100,000 square feet gross floor area or less) to an existing regional retail shopping area is **not** screened out.
5. **Locally Serving Public Facility:** The project is a locally serving public facility defined as a public facility that serves the surrounding community or a public facility that is a passive use. The following are considered locally serving public facilities: transit centers, public schools, libraries, post offices, park-and-ride lots, police and fire facilities, and government offices. Passive public uses include communication and utility buildings, water sanitation, and waste management.
6. **Affordable Housing:** The project has access to transit* and is wholly or has a portion that meets one of the following criteria: is affordable to persons with a household

income equal to or less than 50% of the area median income (as defined by California Health and Safety Code Section 50093), housing for senior citizens [as defined in Section 143.0720(e)], housing for transitional foster youth, disabled veterans, or homeless persons [as defined in 143.0720(f)]. The units shall remain deed restricted for a period of at least 55 years. The project shall provide no more than the minimum amount of parking per unit, per San Diego Municipal Code Section 143.0744. Only the portion of the project that meets the above criteria is screened out. For example, if the project is 100 units with ten deed-restricted affordable housing units, transportation VMT analysis would not be necessary for the ten affordable units but would be necessary for the remaining 90 units (unless they meet one of the other screening criteria). For purposes of applying the small project screening criteria, the applicant would only include the trip generation for the non-affordable housing portion of the project (since the affordable housing portion is screened out).

*Access to transit is defined as transit being located within a reasonable walking distance (1/2 mile) from the project driveway.

7. **Mixed-Use Project Screening Considerations:** The project's individual land uses should be compared to the screening criteria above. It is possible for some of the mixed-use project's land uses to be screened out and some to require further analysis. For purposes of applying the small project screening criteria, the applicant would only include the trip generation for portions of the project that are not screened out based on other screening criteria. For example, if a project includes residential and retail, and the retail component was screened out because it is locally serving; only the trip generation of the residential portion would be used to determine if the project meets the definition of a small project.
8. **Redevelopment Project Screening Considerations:** The project is a redevelopment project that demonstrates that the proposed project's total project VMT is less than the existing land use's total VMT. Exception: If a project replaces affordable housing (either deed restricted or other types of affordable housing) with a smaller number of moderate-income or high-income residential units, the project is not screened out and must analyze VMT impacts per *Table 4-1*.

4.3.2 *SANDAG Regional Travel Demand Model*

If a project is not presumed to have a less than significant VMT impact due to project characteristics and/or location, a transportation VMT analysis using the SANDAG Regional Travel Demand Model is required per the *TSM*.

Table 4-2 further details the methodology based on the land use per the *TSM*.

TABLE 4-2
TRANSPORTATION VMT ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY BY LAND USE

Land Use Type	Thresholds for Determination of a Significant Transportation VMT Impact
Residential	<p>For projects that generate less than 2,400 daily unadjusted driveway trips: Identify the location of the project on the SANDAG Resident VMT/Capita map. The project's Resident VMT/Capita will be considered the same as the Resident VMT/Capita of the census tract it is located in. Compare the project's Resident VMT/Capita to the threshold to determine if the impact is significant OR input the project into the SANDAG Regional Travel Demand Model to determine the project's Resident VMT/Capita.</p> <p>For projects that generate greater than 2,400 daily unadjusted driveway trips: Input the project into the SANDAG Regional Travel Demand Model for SANDAG to provide the project's Resident VMT/Capita. To perform the analysis, all project land uses should be inputted, and the VMT/Capita should be determined using the same method/scripts that SANDAG utilizes to develop the SANDAG Resident VMT/Capita maps.</p>
Commercial Employment	<p>For projects that generate less than 2,400 daily unadjusted driveway trips: Identify the location of the project on the SANDAG Employee VMT/Employee map. The project's Employee VMT/Employee will be considered the same as the Employee VMT/Employee of the census tract it is located in. Compare the project's Employee VMT/Employee to the threshold to determine if the impact is significant OR input the project into the SANDAG Regional Travel Demand Model to determine the project's Employee VMT/Employee.</p> <p>For projects that generate greater than 2,400 daily unadjusted driveway trips: Input the project into the SANDAG Regional Travel Demand Model for SANDAG to provide the project's Employee VMT/Employee. To perform the analysis, all project land uses should be inputted, and the VMT/Capita should be determined using the same method/scripts that SANDAG utilizes to develop the SANDAG Employee VMT/Employee maps.</p>
Industrial Employment	<p>For projects that generate less than 2,400 daily unadjusted driveway trips: Identify the location of the project on the SANDAG Employee VMT/Employee map. The project's Employee VMT/Employee will be considered the same as the Employee VMT/Employee of the census tract it is located in. Compare the project's Employee VMT/Employee to the threshold to determine if the impact is significant OR input the project into the SANDAG Regional Travel Demand Model to determine the project's Employee VMT/Employee.</p> <p>For projects that generate greater than 2,400 daily unadjusted driveway trips: Input the project into the SANDAG Regional Travel Demand Model to determine the project's Employee VMT/Employee. To perform the analysis, all project land uses should be inputted, and the VMT/Capita should be determined using the same method/scripts that SANDAG utilizes to develop the SANDAG Employee VMT/Employee maps.</p>
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TABLE 4-2
TRANSPORTATION VMT ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY BY LAND USE

Land Use Type	Thresholds for Determination of a Significant Transportation VMT Impact
<i>(Continued from Previous Page)</i>	
Regional Retail	Calculate the change to regional VMT using the SANDAG Travel Demand Model. To calculate the change in regional VMT, the regional retail component of the project should be inputted into the travel demand model (year that is used to determine the VMT thresholds). The "with project regional retail" regional VMT produced by the model run is compared to the "no project" regional VMT.
Hotel	See Commercial Employment
Regional Recreational	See Regional Retail
Regional Public Facilities	See Regional Retail
Mixed-Use	Analyze each land use individually per above categories
Redevelopment	Analyze each land use individually per above categories Exception: If a project replaces affordable housing (either deed restricted or other affordable housing) with a smaller number of moderate-income or high-income residential units, the VMT assessment should incorporate an estimate of the aggregate VMT increase experienced by the displaced residents. The additional VMT due to displaced residents should be incorporated into the Resident VMT/Capita for the project.
Transportation Projects	Calculate the change to regional VMT using the SANDAG Travel Demand Model. To calculate the change in regional VMT, the roadway network in the model should be adjusted to include the proposed transportation project. The "with transportation project" regional VMT produced by the model run is compared to the "no transportation project" regional VMT to determine if there is an increase in regional VMT.

Source: City TSM Table 4 (September 2020)

5.0 VMT ANALYSIS

As discussed previously, the Project was evaluated based on the significance determination thresholds and methodology described in *Section 4*.

5.1 Project Land Use Classification

The City of San Diego's *TSM* provides guidance for the City's CEQA significance thresholds, screening criteria, and methodology for conducting the transportation VMT analysis for a variety of land uses, including residential, commercial employment, regional retail, and others, as outlined in *Table 4-1*.

The Project proposes to redevelop the site with a 40,000 SF Scottish Rite Center and a 126,932 SF Home Depot (including a 106,688 SF home improvement center and a 20,244 SF garden center). Based on the *TSM*, the analysis approach for these two land uses are based on different metrics. Therefore, the proposed uses are analyzed individually. A discussion of the land use classification (as summarized in *Table 4-1*) for each of the proposed Project components is summarized below.

5.1.1 *Scottish Rite Center*

Currently, the 63,882 SF Scottish Rite Event Center not only provides facilities for its internal fraternal organization but also for Gem shows, San Diego Rocket Con, Coinarama, and various trade shows and events that draw people from the entire region. The Scottish Rite Event Center currently has capacity for 10,000 guests. The proposed Project reduces the Scottish Rite Center to a 40,000 SF Scottish Rite facility that will serve just the fraternal organization itself without the regional Gem Shows, trade shows and other similar events. The Project also eliminates the existing, approximately 7,100 SF car dealership use.

Since the Project proposes to redevelop the site, downsizing the Scottish Rite Center from 63,882 SF to 40,000 SF and eliminating the existing car dealership, this component of the Project can be considered a "Redevelopment" use.

5.1.2 *Home Depot*

The Home Depot component of the Project includes a 106,688 SF home improvement center and a 20,244 SF garden center. The new store deployment is intended by Home Depot as an in-fill opportunity to provide relief to several other Home Depot locations in the immediate vicinity, including the Sports Arena, Genesee, Imperial, and Fairmount Avenue locations. Therefore, the Project is expected to reduce the VMT that Home Depot customers in Mission Valley and surrounding communities would have to drive to shop at a Home Depot store. Since the Project is greater than 100,000 SF, it should be evaluated as a "Regional Retail" use.

5.2 Scottish Rite Center VMT Analysis

As noted above, the Project proposes to redevelop the site, eliminating the existing 7,100 SF car dealership, downsizing the Scottish Rite Center from 63,882 SF to 40,000 SF, and discontinuing the previously held special events, including gem shows and other regionally attracting "convention-

like” uses. Therefore, this component of the Project can be considered a “Redevelopment” use. Screening Criteria number eight (8), “Redevelopment Project Screening Considerations”, described above in *Section 4.3.1* is applicable to the Project. Based on the TSM guidelines, a project that meets at least one of the screening criteria would be presumed to have a less than significant VMT impact.

The “Redevelopment Project Screening Considerations” criteria is applicable when a project is a redevelopment project that demonstrates that the proposed project's total project VMT is less than the existing land use's total VMT. Since the downsized Scottish Rite Center will not result in a change to the land use, but rather a smaller facility with a discontinuation of regionally serving events, the average trip length associated with the site is anticipated to decrease and the total VMT is anticipated to be less than the existing land use's total VMT.

Based on the above discussion, the Scottish Rite Center component of the Project meets at least one of the screening criteria included in the *TSM* and is therefore presumed to have a less than significant VMT impact.

5.3 Home Depot VMT Analysis

The Home Depot component of the Project includes a 106,688 SF home improvement center and a 20,244 SF garden center. None of the screening criteria described in *Section 4.3.1* are applicable to this component of the Project. Since the Project is not presumed to have a less than significant VMT impact due to project characteristics and/or location, a transportation VMT analysis using the SANDAG Regional Travel Demand Model was conducted per the *TSM*.

In order to calculate the Project induced change to regional VMT, LLG coordinated with SANDAG to input the Project into the SANDAG Series 13 Mission Valley Community Plan Year 2050 Travel Demand Model. The model generates a land use-specific average trip length as well as an average daily volume. This model was selected to analyze the Project’s potential VMT impacts in order to be consistent with the Mission Valley Community Plan Update (MVCPU), for which this model was created. The available SANDAG models nearest to the Project’s Opening Year (Year 2025 or Year 2030), which is anticipated to be 2023, do not include the MVCPU and were therefore not utilized to analyze the Project’s potential VMT impacts.

The Project site is located in Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) 3221. Two models were obtained: a total gross regionwide VMT report for baseline (without Project) conditions, and a total gross regionwide VMT report including the proposed Project. The SANDAG Series 13 Mission Valley Community Plan Year 2050 Travel Demand Model results are included in *Appendix A*.

Table 5–1 summarizes the gross regionwide VMT under baseline (without Project) and “with Project” conditions. As seen in *Table 5–1*, the total gross regionwide VMT without the Project is 96,928,220. The total gross regionwide VMT with the Project is 96,767,342. Therefore, the Project is expected to reduce regional VMT by 160,878 (a reduction of 0.0017% of the regional VMT).

This reduction in regionwide VMT can be partially attributed to the Project’s intended use as an in-fill opportunity to provide relief to several other Home Depot locations in the immediate vicinity.

The Project is expected to reduce the distance that Home Depot customers in Mission Valley and surrounding communities would have to drive to shop at a Home Depot.

Since the Project does not result in a net increase in the total regional VMT, the Project is calculated to have a less than significant VMT impact.

TABLE 5-1
PROJECT VMT FINDINGS

Total Gross Regionwide VMT (without Project)	Total Gross Regionwide VMT (with Project)	Increase / (Decrease) in VMT	Significant Transportation Impact?
96,928,220	96,767,342	(160,878)	No

Source: SANDAG, August, 2020

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

The Project site is a part of the MVCPU PEIR (Project No. 518009/SCH No. 2017071066). Analysis of this Project's traffic impacts tiers off the traffic analysis in the PEIR. As disclosed in the concurrently prepared Transportation Impact Analysis report, the Project is implementing the Regional Commercial Land Use designation for this property as identified in the approved PEIR. Consistent with the City of San Diego's *Transportation Study Manual (TSM)*, September 2020, for a project within the scope of the PEIR, the preceding VMT analysis was conducted.

Based on the VMT analysis presented in this study and the City's *TSM*, with the reduction in square footage and regional serving nature, the Scottish Rite Center component of the Project as a redevelopment project can be presumed to have a less than significant VMT impact.

A transportation VMT analysis using the SANDAG Regional Travel Demand Model was conducted for the Home Depot component of the Project, per the *TSM*. The Project was found to not result in a net increase in the total regional VMT, and therefore, the Project is calculated to have a less than significant VMT impact. Therefore, no mitigation measures are needed.

VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED STUDY
TECHNICAL APPENDICES
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX

A. SANDAG Series 13 Year 2050 Travel Demand Model Results

APPENDIX A

SANDAG SERIES 13 YEAR 2050 TRAVEL DEMAND MODEL RESULTS

Vehicle Miles of Travel Report

Scenario ID 1234

Mission Valley Home Depot - 2050rcHomeDepot - Community Plan Area

Aggregate VMT

Gross VMT

Geography	VMT
Regionwide	96,767,342
Clip 1	
Clip 2	

Region-wide VMT under Year 2050 + Project conditions

Distribution VMT

Query	Type	Description	VMT
1	Zone	0	
2	0	0	-
3	0	0	-
4	0	0	-

SB-743 VMT

VMT per Resident

Geography	Scenario ID	Residents	Total Trips	Person Miles of Travel	Vehicle Miles of Travel	VMT per Resident
Regionwide	1234	4,109,163	14,684,542	86,754,559	60,043,336	14.6
Jurisdiction	SAN DIEGO	1,818,177	6,507,027	34,074,847	22,733,492	12.5
CPA	Mission Valley	74,363	275,004	1,285,957	866,621	11.7
Site	TAZ 3221	52	182	784	635	12.2

VMT per Employee

Geography	Scenario ID	Employees	Total Trips	Person Miles of Travel	Vehicle Miles of Travel	VMT per Employee
Regionwide	1234	1,736,694	5,654,279	43,831,882	37,526,045	21.6
Jurisdiction	SAN DIEGO	906,894	2,808,861	21,257,396	18,390,858	20.3
CPA	Mission Valley	56,601	169,970	1,093,205	941,853	16.6
Site	TAZ 3221	272	866	5,469	4,745	17.4

Report Generated: 08/10/20



Here are some regionwide VMT figures:

Series 13 2050	948	96,753,962
City MV	1081	96,928,220
MV HD	1234	96,767,342



Region-wide VMT under Year
2050 without Project conditions

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