



June 12, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
California State Capitol  
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

### **Support for Scheduled Statewide Implementation of SB 743**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the undersigned, I write to thank you for the work your office has done to develop thoughtful guidelines for implementing Senate Bill 743 (Steinberg) of 2013 and to urge your office to proceed with statewide implementation of the law by July 1, 2020, as planned.

SPUR recognizes the passage of SB 743 in 2013 as a major advance that built on the policy rationale and moved to fulfill the promise of SB 375 (Steinberg) of 2008. We will not be able to make the necessary reductions to our greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, and congestion without bending the growth curve of vehicle miles travelled (VMT).

We support replacing the level of service (LOS) analysis for determining a project's transportation impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) with a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) metric. LOS analyses disproportionately burden smart and sustainable infill development and related sustainable transportation infrastructure by privileging automobile traffic over transit riders, pedestrians, and bicyclists. VMT represents a far more accurate measure to determine transportation and environmental impacts of new developments and transportation projects, and will ensure that CEQA review aligns with the state's larger environmental and housing goals.

SB 743 provides this overdue change in analysis from LOS to VMT, and offers much needed relief for infill housing and sustainable transportation projects, by streamlining CEQA review for projects in low-VMT areas and near major transit. Allowing the current LOS regime to continue beyond July 1, 2020 would run counter to state policy and law, including your Executive Order N-19-19, by maintaining regulatory burdens on infill housing, sustainable transportation projects, and a loss of mitigation for projects that contribute to regional traffic congestion, air pollution and climate change.

California is in the midst of a dire housing shortage relative to our population and number of jobs, leading to high rents and unaffordable home prices for most residents. A primary reason for that shortage is burdensome local permitting processes, particularly in infill areas. SB 743 reduces that burden by helping infill housing avoid unnecessary and counterproductive environmental review.

We strongly urge the State to stay the course on SB 743 implementation and thank you for your efforts to address our statewide housing shortage and climate change challenges with comprehensive solutions.

Sincerely,

Nick Josefowitz  
Director of Policy  
SPUR

Gwen Litvak  
Senior Vice President, Public Policy  
Bay Area Council

Jason Baker  
Vice-President Transportation, Housing & Community Development  
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