

**City of El Paso de Robles  
General Plan  
Circulation Element**

Prepared for:

**City of El Paso de Robles  
Community Development Department**

Prepared by:

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Circulation Element .....</b>	<b>CE-1</b>
Goals, Policies, and Action Items .....	CE-1
Circulation Issues .....	CE-5
Circulation Standards and Development Policies .....	CE-13

## APPENDICES

Appendix A: Roadway Capacity Utilization Analysis

Appendix B: City of El Paso de Robles Travel Demand Forecasting Final model Development Report

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure CE-1 Circulation Element Master Plan .....	CE-7
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## LIST OF TABLES

Table CE-1 Existing and 2025 Roadway Segment Utilization .....	CE-8
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This document has been developed to emphasize that the first priority of the circulation system is to provide mobility to people. This emphasis, along with the high costs and quality of life impacts of roadway widening, supports the development of an efficient system allowing travel by multiple modes. Efficiency in this context is defined as using facilities to their maximum extent possible, e.g. the efficiency as viewed from an economic perspective.

## **GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTION ITEMS**

**GOAL CE-1: Establish a safe, balanced, efficient, and multimodal circulation system, focusing on the mobility of people, and preserving the City's small town character and quality of life.**

**POLICY CE-1A:** Circulation Master Plan. Revise/update the City's Circulation Master Plan to address the mobility needs of all users of the streets, roads and highways including bicyclists, children, persons with disabilities, motorists, movers of commercial goods, pedestrians, users of public transportation, and seniors as follows:

- a. Improve the circulation network on a prioritized basis;
- b. Provide adequate access for emergency vehicles and evacuation;
- c. Improve mobility through and access to Downtown Paso Robles by implementing City Council adopted Town Center and Uptown Plans;
- d. Establish safe pedestrian and bicycle paths, for children and their parents to schools and other major destinations such as downtown, retail and job centers;
- e. Maintain mobility for all modes by encouraging; flexible and off-set working hours, transit improvements; pedestrian and bikeway improvements; and public outreach as to the availability and benefit of alternative modes of travel;
- f. Require new development to mitigate its impact on the transportation network.
- g. Utilize roadways to achieve multiple environmental benefits through integration of Low-Impact Development storm water management features in City streets.

**Action Item 1.** Develop a multimodal transportation mitigation fee program so that new development contributes to improvements that offset cumulative impacts to mobility. The impact fee program will list needed improvements to automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities. To encourage the reduction of City-wide VMT (Vehicle Miles Traveled), the mitigation fee program will recognize and support Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies associated with new development. Fees shall be assessed in relation to cumulative impacts and shall be proportional to the number of auto trips generated by the development.

**Action Item 2.** Set conditions of approval of development applications to provide access for all modes of travel and to make appropriate improvements to the transportation system serving subject sites including frontage improvements and all improvements needed to mitigate transportation impacts.

**Action Item 3.** Preserve right-of-way in accordance with the Circulation Master Plan and all adopted Plan Lines.

**Action Item 4.** Request the County to mitigate transportation impacts to City facilities by requiring participation by County development projects in the City's transportation impact fee program as appropriate.

**Action Item 5.** Update the Zoning, Subdivision, Streets and Sidewalk chapters of the Municipal Code, as well as the Standard Conditions of Approval and Standard Specifications and Details. These updates shall reflect a "complete streets" approach where all modes of travel are routinely accommodated, and environmental benefits would result from integration of LID storm water management facilities in streets and sidewalks.

**Action Item 6.** Implement the City's Traffic Calming Program as funding is available. Neighborhood preservation and context shall be a factor in the consideration of community mobility objectives.

**Action Item 7.** Continue to actively seek federal, state, and regional grants and funding.

**Action Item 8.** Construct roundabouts in lieu of traffic signals where appropriate conditions exist to maximize the efficiency of streets, maintain continuous but moderate traffic flow, reduce accident severity, and enhance pedestrian and cyclist activity.

**Action Item 9.** Install all transportation improvements in accordance with current accessibility standards.

**Action Item 10.** Establish limitations on truck traffic in residential areas and adopt designated truck routes.

**Action Item 11.** Develop and adopt transportation impact study guidelines that specify the process by which new development impacts are identified. These guidelines shall include specific performance measures and thresholds for the identification of impacts and mitigation measures in accordance with the goals herein, including person mobility, the reduction in VMT and the development of a balanced transportation network for all modes. Street widths and consideration of additional traffic lanes shall be evaluated in the context of potential impacts to community character, convenience for non-auto modes, safety and cost/benefit.

**Action Item 12.** The City will work in coordination with Caltrans on congestion management strategies on SR 46 and US 101. These strategies will include improved connectivity for all modes of transportation across these corridors and in areas on either side of these facilities. The City and Caltrans will work in concert with the most recent Regional Transportation Plan.

**Action Item 13.** The City shall monitor the performance of the transportation network on a regular basis. The City will optimize traffic signals to maximize the efficiency of the existing network. The City shall explore the feasibility of coordinating all traffic signals with a centralized traffic signal control system.

**Action Item 14.** Maintain and/or improve emergency vehicle access on all existing streets. New development shall provide emergency vehicle access as required by all applicable codes and the Emergency Services Department.

**Action Item 15.** Integrate the City's traffic model with City land use planning and the regional traffic model produced by the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments.

**Action Item 16.** View all transportation improvements, new or retrofit, as opportunities to improve safety, access, and mobility for all travelers and recognize bicycle, pedestrian, and transit modes as integral elements of the transportation system.

**Action Item 17.** Transportation policies should link transportation planning and land use planning.

**Action Item 18.** Transportation systems and facilities should be planned, designed and constructed so as not to serve as barriers to community resources.

**Action Item 19.** Transportation improvements shall improve accessibility and promote physical activity.

**POLICY CE-1B:** Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). The City shall strive to reduce VMT generated per household per weekday by making efficient use of existing transportation facilities and by providing direct routes for pedestrians and bicyclists through the implementation of sustainable planning principles.

**Action Item 1.** New developments shall conform to the following guidelines to the maximum extent possible:

- New streets and intersections shall be designed for continuous flow at moderate speeds. Low volume residential streets should be designed for speeds of 25 miles per hour or less. Higher order roadways shall be designed for 35 mph or less with stable flows. Roundabouts shall be considered in lieu of traffic signals for intersection control as needed.
- To the extent practical, new residential streets shall provide a grid roadway system with block lengths of 300 feet or more and not longer than 600 feet. Cul-de-sac streets shall be discouraged. Street widths shall be no greater than as needed to accommodate emergency service vehicles. Design standards compatible with traditional neighborhood shall be developed.
- Lane configurations for new intersections shall be limited to provide for moderate speeds and pedestrian and cyclist safety. Congestion during certain time periods shall be accepted in exchange for shorter pedestrian and cyclist crossing distances, less overall paved area, reduced costs and preservation of small town character.
- Circulation systems shall provide for all modes of travel and shall typically include sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and transit stop amenities. Continuous paths of travel shall be established and connected for walking and bicycling from and throughout new developments to downtown and other key destinations. As appropriate and practical, all development shall conform to the most current Bike Master Plan adopted by the City Council and the most current trail system plan. Impact fees shall be assessed to mitigate impacts and to contribute to the development of the bike and pedestrian master plans.
- New specific plans shall include a mix of uses that are well connected for all modes and built at higher densities to help minimize the number of single occupant vehicle trips and reduce vehicle miles traveled.

**Action Item 2.** Develop well connected routes for bicycles throughout the City in accordance with the most current council adopted Bike Master Plan.

**Action Item 3.** The City shall make the travel demand model available to consultants of land development applications to verify traffic generation assumptions in accordance with the General Plan. The model will be used to estimate the change in VMT resulting from proposed development.

**Action Item 4.** To the extent feasible, maintain a general plan that provides for a reasonable, ongoing balance between jobs and housing units of various types to maximize the potential for residents to live in the community in which they work. This approach reduces the potential for longer vehicle commutes and reduces City-generated and Countywide VMT.

**POLICY CE-1C:** Airport. Improve/expand transportation to and from the Paso Robles Municipal Airport as set forth in the Airport Master Plan.

**Action Item 1.** Establish policy and actions items as part of the Airport Master Plan and Airport Land Use Plan Updates.

**Action Item 2.** Pursue federal and state grants for airport improvement projects.

**Action Item 3.** Enhance bicycle, pedestrian and transit access to allow employees and passengers to use non-automobile modes of travel to and from the Airport.

**POLICY CE-1 D:** Transit. Improve and expand transit services.

**Action Item 1.** Continue operation of local bus service including inter-connectivity with regional transit.

**Action Item 2.** Coordinate with the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority to improve information available on transit options and support advertising/outreach programs for transit.

**Action Item 3.** Develop Park and Ride Lots at convenient locations.

**Action Item 4.** Establish a Master Plan of transit routes within the City coordinated with regional routes. Require new development to include design elements that promote transit use in accordance with the Master Plan such as locating sheltered bus stops near neighborhood focal points, shopping and service destinations.

**Action Item 5.** Locate transit routes on streets serving medium and high density development where feasible.

**Action Item 6.** Link neighborhoods to transit stops and park-and-ride lots by providing direct bicycle and pedestrian access.

**Action Item 7.** Support the development of a transit/trolley loop serving the Downtown area to encourage a park-once strategy.

**Action Item 8.** Support and improve the multi-modal facility on Pine Street. Consider the establishment of a similar facility on the east side of the City.

**Action Item 9.** Support convenient transit service to employment centers and government centers as funding allows. Work with San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (SLORTA) to provide fixed route and/or commuter bus service as appropriate.

**Action Item 10.** Develop a plan to monitor transit system performance and evaluate expansions to transit service.

**POLICY CE-1E:** Rail. Promote regional, interstate and intra-state rail service.

**Action Item 1.** Maintain adequate freight rail service (to the extent freight service does not conflict with the Town Centre Plan).

**Action Item 2.** In conjunction with the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments, support expanding Amtrak rail service.

**Action Item 3.** Promote the Amtrak bus feeder link, which provides connections to trains in the Central Valley.

**POLICY CE-1F:** Pedestrian and Bicycle Access. Provide safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access to all areas of the city.

**Action Item 1.** Develop a Pedestrian Master Plan (PMP) identifying and prioritizing improvements to the pedestrian network to support walking as a viable primary mode of travel within Paso Robles. At a minimum, the PMP should include the following components:

- A crosswalk policy to address warrants for installation and enhancements to crosswalks.
- A sidewalk and trail master plan with an inventory of existing and missing sidewalks and a list of projects to ensure pedestrian connections to downtown, employment centers, shopping and services.
- An on-going program to identify and eliminate hazardous conditions to pedestrians and to provide a sidewalk or formal path on every City-controlled street.

**Action Item 2.** Maintain and update as needed the Bicycle Master Plan (BMP) identifying and prioritizing improvements to the bicycle network to support biking as a viable primary mode of travel within Paso Robles. The BMP shall provide bike facilities on or parallel to all major arterials (including bridges) and a network of off-street paths to facilitate commute and recreational bicycle travel. The BMP should identify bicycle priority streets, bicycle boulevards, and bicycle routes that create a fully connected network throughout the City.

**Action Item 3.** Provide safe and convenient pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle access to the Cuesta College North County Campus, through the following means:

- Incorporate access to and from the campus in City circulation, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit planning.
- Implement appropriate signage and vehicle speed controls to ensure safety to pedestrians in the vicinity of the campus.
- Encourage distribution of trip reduction information, including transit and ridesharing information, to Cuesta College students, faculty, and staff.
- Work with Caltrans and SLOCOG to construct bicycle-pedestrian under-crossings of State Route 46E per the adopted BMP and the Caltrans Corridor Study.

**Action Item 4.** Establish a formal Safe Routes to School Program and pursue grant funding to encourage children to safely walk and bike to school.

**Action Item 5.** Collect pedestrian and bicycle volumes with intersection counts to ensure adequate data is available for prioritizing improvements to the transportation network.

**Action Item 6.** Improve streetscapes and install curb extensions at intersections where appropriate to reduce driving speeds and shorten pedestrian crossing distances.

**Action Item 7.** Support lighted LED cross-walks where pedestrian traffic volumes are high or safety considerations warrant implementation.

**Action Item 8.** Update and expand the American Disabilities Act (ADA) City Transition Plan to include public street right-of-way improvements.

## **CIRCULATION ISSUES**

### ***Circulation Master Plan (CMP)***

To provide safe and efficient mobility, both within the City and between the City and surrounding areas, a master system of transportation facilities is needed to serve residential, commercial, industrial, and tourist needs.

The system of key arterial routes is mapped on the 2011 Circulation Master Plan Map (Figure CE-1). The character of these routes is established in terms of numbers of lanes required. The locations of planned intersection and/or interchange improvements are also identified. Figure CE-1 is designed to respond to the Land Use Element of the General Plan. If land is not developed, or uses change, the entire network of planned facilities may not be needed or it may change to suit future land use modifications.

Assignment of main streets, boulevards, parkways, rural, and hillside streets, as well as bicycle and pedestrian paths, is determined at the time of approval of Specific Plans, subdivision maps (including parcel maps) and development plans. The Circulation Element anticipates that as the City develops, selected transportation facilities will need to be improved. Continued growth and development of the community will be supported by holistic improvements that will increase the efficiency of the vehicle network as well as bicycle, pedestrian, and transit systems.

The purpose of the circulation system is to maintain and enhance safe and efficient person mobility in the City (per Goal CE-1). To support this goal, the 2011 Circulation Element Update changes how the performance of the transportation network is measured de-emphasizing an auto-centric measure (level of service or LOS) in favor of measures that represent a more efficient use of resources, support the mobility of people, quality of life and small town feel desired by residents. In addition, measures supporting person mobility will offer more travel choices, support public health goals by encouraging more walking and biking, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The 2003 Circulation Element included a citywide target of LOS D for all roadways during the peak hours of travel. Level of service measures driver comfort and convenience, and LOS D reflects a utilization substantially below the roadway's capacity during the majority of the day. This is an inefficient usage of infrastructure, one which results in costly roadway widening to accommodate only brief periods of higher traffic levels (i.e., the worst minutes or hours of the day). These widening projects have secondary impacts of encouraging higher rates of vehicular speed, degrading mobility for pedestrians and cyclists and affecting the overall quality of life in surrounding areas. With this in mind, future traffic projections are presented in terms of capacity utilization, or the extent to which the roadway's capacity is being used on a daily basis.

The 2011 Circulation Element Update Map is generally consistent with the 2003 Circulation Element Map, but it removes a number of infrastructure recommendations due to revised traffic projections and changes to the City's Circulation Element Goals, Policies, and Action Items. Figure CE-1 illustrates both the existing and future City street system. Compared to the 2003 Circulation Element, this Circulation Element update identifies 34.5 fewer lane miles by Year 2025. This is the equivalent to removing a two-lane roadway from downtown Paso Robles to more than halfway to downtown San Luis Obispo. The pattern and location of future facilities are not precise and will warrant periodic study updates to confirm their appropriateness and feasibility. The map presents the network needed to serve key circulation demands to the Year 2025 planning horizon, while accommodating the City's multi-modal and community goals for the transportation network.

Fehr & Peers developed a Citywide Traffic Model to assist in the Circulation Element update process. The traffic model is an important transportation planning tool that is used to forecast travel in the City based on expected land use and/or roadway network changes. The traffic model can be used to test the effects of alternative land use scenarios and potential roadway network improvements, and to estimate the resultant traffic levels.

### ***Circulation Element Update Analysis***

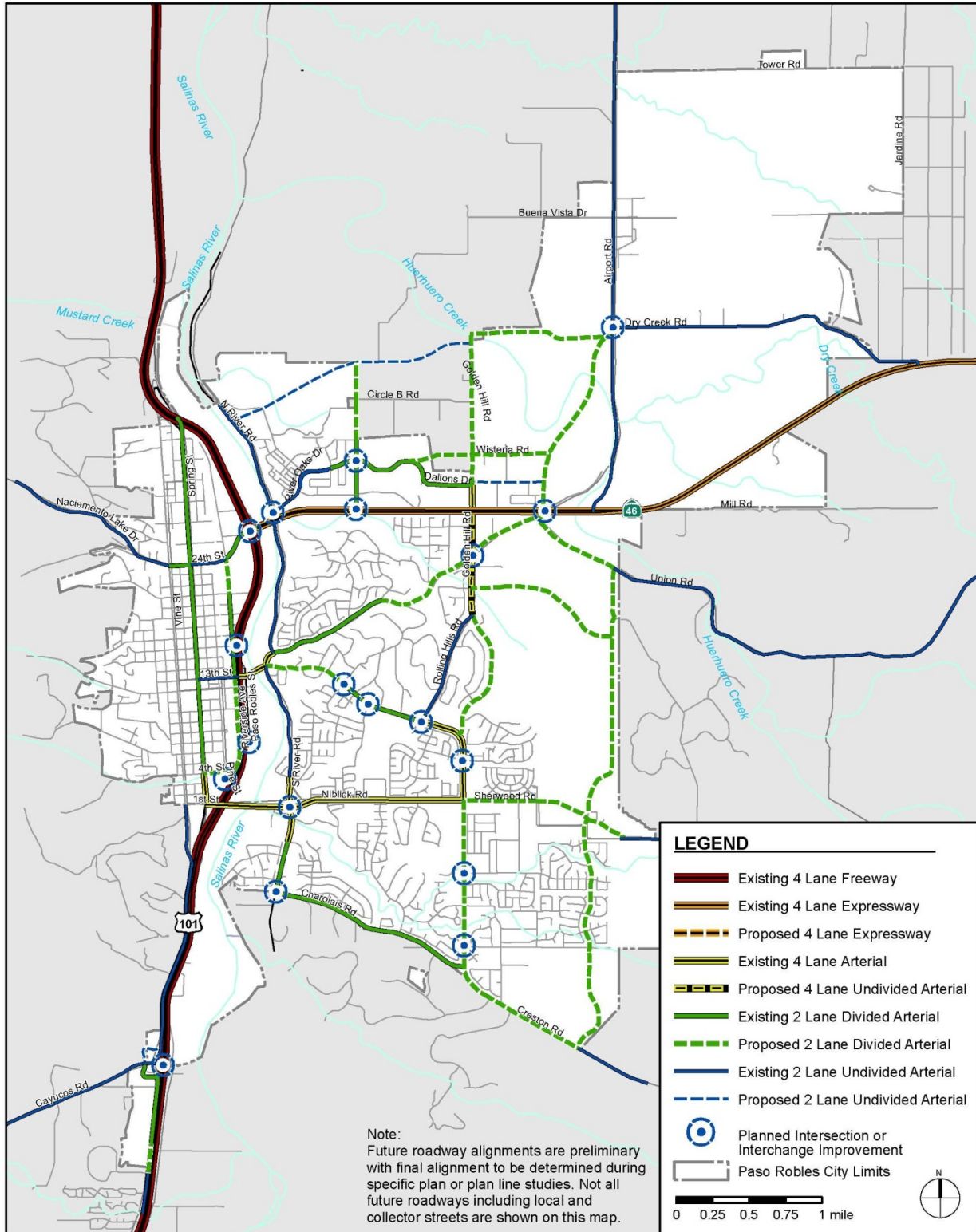
This 2011 Circulation Element Update applied the land use projections in the currently adopted Land Use Element of the General Plan to determine future mobility needs. The model development process, as well as the initial data collection and assumptions that are a part of this Circulation Element update process, are fully documented in a separate Technical Appendix report. This appendix includes the following:

- Initial data collection, including traffic counts and land use data files,
- Baseline assumptions, including trip generation, distribution, land use, growth,
- Model development process, including calibration and validation process
- 2025 travel forecasts

### ***Future Corridor Operations***

Using the 2025 travel forecasts, the capacity utilization for major arterials and collectors within Paso Robles is summarized in Table CE-1, which includes the proposed improvements presented in Figure CE-1. The capacity utilization represents the projected volume divided by the roadway's calculated capacity. These are "planning level" capacities and forecasts, intended to predict the need for improvements.





**Table CE-1  
EXISTING AND 2025 ROADWAY SEGMENT UTILIZATION**

Roadway Segment		Existing Conditions		Year 2025 Conditions <sup>1</sup>	
		ADT	Capacity Utilization	ADT	Capacity Utilization
<b>City Segments</b>					
24 <sup>th</sup> Street	Spring Street to US 101	15,700	89%	14,100	80%
Airport Road	SR 46 to Dry Creek Road	5,400	30%	4,000	23%
Charolais Road	S. River Road to Rambouillet Road	7,100	33%	11,500	53%
	Rambouillet Road to Creston Road	4,700	22%	9,000	41%
13 <sup>th</sup> Street	Spring Street to Riverside Avenue	8,600	49%	11,200	63%
	Riverside Avenue to S. River Road	25,400	68%	32,200	86%
Creston Road	S. River Road to Golden Hill Road	15,800	73%	19,800	91%
	Golden Hill Road to Niblick Road	17,700	47%	25,200	67%
	Niblick Road to Charolais Road	5,500	15%	8,000	37%
	Charolais Road to East City Limit	4,200	19%	7,400	34%
Dallons Drive	Buena Vista Drive to Golden Hill Road	1,300	8%	2,600	15%
Golden Hill Road	Dallons Drive to SR 46 East	2,200	13%	12,800	34%
	Creston Road to Rolling Hills Road	9,300	43%	13,800	64%
	Rolling Hills Road to Union Road	11,200	51%	17,100	46%
	Union Road to SR 46 East	7,100	40%	11,100	30%
Linne Road	Fontana Road to East City Limit	4,100	23%	10,700	60%
Nacimiento Lake Dr.	West City Limit	7,300	41%	9,700	55%
Niblick Road	Spring Street to S. River Road	30,100	80%	38,100	<b>102%</b>
	S. River Road to Melody Drive	19,400	52%	25,400	68%
	Melody Drive to Creston Road	14,100	38%	19,700	53%
N. River Road	Union Road to SR 46 East	2,700	20%	4,200	31%
	SR 46 East to North City Limit	1,200	9%	1,300	10%
Rolling Hills Road	Creston Road to Golden Hill Road	2,800	16%	3,600	20%
Paso Robles Street	Freeway Off-Ramp to Creston Road	5,800	61%	5,600	58%

Notes:

1. Year 2025 with proposed improvements shown on Figure CE-1.

Reductions in utilization can occur with a reduction in volume due to changes in travel patterns or with an increase in capacity.

ADT = Average Daily Traffic during a typical weekday.

High utilization locations are indicated in **bold**.

Source: Fehr & Peers, January 2011.

**Table CE-1  
EXISTING AND 2025 ROADWAY SEGMENT UTILIZATION**

Roadway Segment		Existing Conditions		Year 2025 Conditions <sup>1</sup>	
		ADT	Capacity Utilization	ADT	Capacity Utilization
<b>City Segments</b>					
River Oaks Drive	N. River Road to Buena Vista Drive	1,900	11%	2,600	15%
Riverside Avenue	13 <sup>th</sup> Street to 24 <sup>th</sup> Street	11,800	67%	13,700	63%
Sherwood Road	Creston Road to Fontana Road	10,000	56%	16,200	75%
S. River Road	Charolais Road to Serenade Drive	2,300	17%	2,600	19%
	Serenade Drive to Niblick Road	12,800	34%	17,400	47%
	Niblick Road to Navajo Avenue	13,400	36%	15,100	40%
Spring Street	10 <sup>th</sup> Street to 11 <sup>th</sup> Street	13,900	64%	15,000	69%
	16 <sup>th</sup> Street to 17 <sup>th</sup> Street	13,800	64%	17,900	82%
	28 <sup>th</sup> Street to 30 <sup>th</sup> Street	4,900	23%	6,900	32%
Union Road	N. River Road to Walnut Drive	5,500	26%	9,000	41%
	Walnut Drive to Golden Hill Road	5,300	30%	9,100	51%
	Golden Hill Road to SR 46 East	7,800	44%	14,100	65%
	SR 46 East to East City Limit	3,300	18%	4,600	21%
Buena Vista Drive	SR 46 East to Experimental Station Road	4,400	20%	6,800	31%
	North of Cuesta College	2,600	12%	3,500	16%
Dry Creek Road	Airport Road to SR 46 East	1,300	7%	3,800	21%
Nickerson/Appaloosa	Niblick Road to Creston Road	2,000	15%	2,400	18%
Pine Street	6 <sup>th</sup> Street to 13 <sup>th</sup> Street	3,400	35%	3,000	31%
Ramada Drive	SR 46 West to Calle Propano	1,700	18%	4,700	49%
	SR 46 West to South City Limit	3,100	33%	6,100	64%
Rambouillet Road	Charolais Road to Niblick Road	1,600	12%	1,500	11%
S. River Road	Navajo Avenue to Creston Road	11,200	63%	13,700	77%
Theatre Drive	SR 46 West to South City Limit	9,600	44%	12,300	57%
S. Vine Street	SR 46 West to 1 <sup>st</sup> Street	4,800	27%	12,700	72%
Vine Street	3 <sup>rd</sup> Street to 4 <sup>th</sup> Street	4,000	30%	5,500	41%
	30 <sup>th</sup> Street to 32 <sup>nd</sup> Street	300	3%	1,200	9%

Notes:

1. Year 2025 with proposed improvements shown on Figure CE-1.

Reductions in utilization can occur with a reduction in volume due to changes in travel patterns or with an increase in capacity.

ADT = Average Daily Traffic during a typical weekday.

High utilization locations are indicated in **bold**.

Source: Fehr & Peers, January 2011.

<b>Table CE-1 EXISTING AND 2025 ROADWAY SEGMENT UTILIZATION</b>					
<b>Roadway Segment</b>		<b>Existing Conditions</b>		<b>Year 2025 Conditions<sup>1</sup></b>	
		<b>ADT</b>	<b>Capacity Utilization</b>	<b>ADT</b>	<b>Capacity Utilization</b>
<b>City Segments</b>					
Spring Street	3 <sup>rd</sup> Street to 4 <sup>th</sup> Street	19,300	89%	<b>22,700</b>	<b>105%</b>
	6 <sup>th</sup> Street to 7 <sup>th</sup> Street	15,600	72%	16,700	77%
<b>Adjacent Jurisdictions</b>					
US 101	Wellsona Road to Spring Street	22,700	28%	50,400	63%
	Spring Street to SR 46 East	20,000	25%	47,800	60%
	SR 46 East to 13 <sup>th</sup> Street	35,500	44%	67,000	84%
	Spring Street to SR 46 West	64,000	80%	<b>93,300</b>	<b>117%</b>
	SR 46 West to Main Street	53,000	66%	79,000	99%
SR 46 East	US 101 to Union Road	26,000	59%	<b>48,900</b>	<b>109%</b>
	Union Road to Airport Road	24,000	34%	38,000	52%
	Airport Road to Jardine Road	19,700	54%	34,400	47%
Dry Creek Road	Aerotech Center Way to Prairie Road	1,300	7%	1,600	9%
Union Road	Airport Rd Ext. (future) to Penman Springs Rd	3,300	19%	4,600	26%
Linne Road	Hanson Road to Penman Springs Road	4,100	23%	7,000	40%
Creston Road	Airport Rd Ext. (future) to Neals Spring Road	4,200	24%	8,500	48%
S. River Road	Santa Ysabel Avenue to Pin Oak Lane	2,300	17%	2,600	19%
Ramada Drive	Volpi Ysabel Road to Easy Street	3,100	32%	6,100	64%
Theatre Drive	Nutwood Circle to Rancho Paso Road	9,600	54%	13,600	77%
SR 46 West	Gahan Place to Del Sol Place	7,200	20%	19,400	53%
Nacimiento Lake Dr.	Mustang Springs Road to Adelaida Road	7,300	41%	9,700	55%
Notes:					
1. Year 2025 with proposed improvements shown on Figure CE-1.					
Reductions in utilization can occur with a reduction in volume due to changes in travel patterns or with an increase in capacity.					
ADT = Average Daily Traffic during a typical weekday.					
High utilization locations are indicated in <b>bold</b> .					
Source: Fehr & Peers, January 2011.					

- **Over 100 percent utilization** results in forced or breakdown conditions for motorists frequently throughout the day. This situation exists when the volume of traffic exceeds the capacity of the roadway and queues can form behind these bottleneck points with traffic traveling in a stop-and-go fashion. These conditions warrant more investment in roadway capacity improvements, or another strategy to reduce traffic and/or improve mobility through a particular road segment or intersection.
- **90 to 100 percent utilization** represents operating conditions at or near capacity for motorists. The transportation infrastructure is fully utilized. Speeds are reduced to a low but relatively uniform value. Freedom to maneuver for motorists may be difficult. Unstable operation can occur at certain times of day and minor disturbances in traffic flow can cause breakdown conditions. However, justification for additional lanes and/or road widening is not met, particularly in light of other community goals and environmental impacts.
- **70 to 90 percent utilization** represents high-density, but stable flow for motorists. While some temporary congestion can occur at selected times of day, operations are reasonable for most drivers throughout the day. Motorists experience some restriction in speed and maneuverability, with reduced levels of convenience during peak travel hours. The transportation infrastructure is well-utilized. Additional investment in road widening is not warranted.
- **50 to 70 percent utilization** provides stable operating conditions for motorists and limited delays throughout most of the day. The roadway is only partially utilized. No consideration should be made for road widening. The maneuverability of individual motorists is affected by the interaction with other motorists in the traffic stream. These conditions are less attractive for bicycles, pedestrians, and transit users because of typically higher auto vehicle speeds.
- **30 to 50 percent utilization** provides stable operating conditions for motorists throughout the day. The investment in transportation infrastructure is realized on a very limited basis. Road widening improvements are not warranted. The presence of other motorists causes a noticeable, though slight, reduction in maneuverability. These conditions are always conducive to speeding and typically very discouraging to travel by bicyclists and pedestrians.
- **Less than 30 percent utilization** represents free-flow travel with a high level of maneuverability for motorists at all times of day. The investment in transportation infrastructure is not efficiently utilized. Here vehicle operations are almost always counterproductive for bicycles, pedestrians, and transit users.

The information in Table CE-1 conveys that: 1) most of the City's roadways operate well below their capacity on a daily basis, with a couple of exceptions, and 2) in year 2025 only a handful of streets are projected to have a demand that exceeds their capacity on either city or adjacent jurisdiction roadways. Specifically, the volume on four study segments is projected to exceed the capacity and two of these are on SR 46E and US 101. In addition, only three other segments are projected to have a utilization of between 90 and 100 percent. This indicates that major new capacity enhancements across the City are not justified given the City's goals.

The operations in key corridors in the City are discussed below beginning with US 101 and followed by the three primary east/west corridors. These east/west corridors must traverse the Salinas River, the freeway and the railroad; natural and physical barriers that separate the east and west sides of the City. These barriers are significant constraints on the transportation network. The Spring Street and Creston Road corridors are also discussed. The City should monitor and manage traffic operations along these corridors as development occurs to ensure that the system is optimized for steady, safe, and orderly traffic flow.

**US 101 from Wellsona Road to Main Street** – Degradation of US 101 mainline operations by Year 2025 and beyond is anticipated due to future growth within and outside San Luis Obispo County, as well as the addition of traffic from proposed land uses in Paso Robles' General Plan. Already planned increases in land use and changes to regional travel patterns will contribute to these unacceptable operations.

Traditionally, traffic-related impacts or substantial increases in automobile trips on roadway segments are mitigated by increasing roadway capacity through construction or payment toward additional lanes or other new facilities. US 101 would require widening to six lanes to improve traffic operations to acceptable levels of service. The widening of US 101 is not included in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) or 2011 constrained regional transportation list prepared by SLOCOG. However, the Route 101 North County Corridor Study identifies widening of US 101 as a beyond 2035 improvement. The study also describes the need for auxiliary lanes and other capacity enhancements prior to Year 2035. These enhancements would improve operations and reduce the capacity utilization but would not fully eliminate the projected deficient roadway operations.

The Circulation Element contains several policies that seek to reduce automobile travel. Implementation of these policies and associated actions would help reduce the magnitude of traffic impacts on US 101. Ultimately, SLOCOG and Caltrans are the responsible agencies for planning for and implementing improvements within the US 101 corridor. Payment of traffic impact fees or a fair share contribution would fulfill the City's obligations for mitigating regional traffic impacts; however, unless other funding sources (e.g., State Transportation Improvement Program funds for projects identified in the RTP, San Luis Obispo County fees, and/or a future regional impact fee) are made available, implementation of the necessary improvements is not feasible and implementation of the proposed Circulation Element Update would not improve US 101 operations. The City of Paso Robles would support and participate in development of a regional fee should it be proposed by regional agencies, such as SLOCOG.

**SR 46 East from US Highway 101 to Airport Road** – Future traffic volumes along the SR 46 East corridor are expected to exceed the capacity of this roadway during certain times of day, typically the morning and afternoon two-hour commute periods. The 2008 Caltrans Comprehensive Corridor Study (CCS) establishes that widening SR 46E to accommodate this forecasted demand would be ineffective without substantial capacity and operational improvements to the US 101 mainline and the interchange with SR 46E. SR 46E presents a barrier to connections between areas of the City north and south of the highway. The CCS recognizes that capacity improvements to SR 46E such as six-lane widening conflicts with the City's goals of small town character and mobility associated with non-auto modes. To mitigate impacts on the highway, the CCS endorses the development of a parallel route system of local roads north and south of SR 46E between Jardine Road and River Road that will serve to reduce the demand for travel on SR 46. These routes have been identified in the City's Parallel Routes Study. The alignment of parallel route(s) shall be studied by the City, and constructed with development of the land uses north and south of SR 46. Specific recommendations of the Parallel Routes Study include:

- A connection between Airport Road and Golden Hill Road via the Wisteria Road corridor, including a bridge over Huerhuero Creek.
- A connection between the northern terminus of Golden Hill Road and the western terminus of Dry Creek Road, including a bridge over Huerhuero Creek.
- Improvements to the intersection of SR 46E and Union Road. The City shall monitor traffic levels and plan for a grade separated interchange and interim improvements as needed. The improvement of this intersection will require that the north leg be extended to connect to Airport Road, so that access to uses in the Airport area would be provided via the new intersection at SR 46E-Union Road.
- Improvement to facilities serving non-auto modes of travel will also reduce the auto demand along this corridor.

**13<sup>th</sup> Street from Riverside Avenue to Union Road** – As one of the three major crossings of the Salinas River and the US 101 freeway, the demand for travel across this segment is forecasted to increase to a daily capacity utilization of 95%. This corresponds to increased congestion during the typical commute periods and likely other times of day, but does not justify the widening of this segment by 2025. Improvements within this corridor should focus on operational efficiencies (i.e., signal coordination, modified timings) and enhancements to improve bicycle and pedestrian travel as needed. The construction of the 17<sup>th</sup> Street-Riverside Avenue on-ramp to southbound US 101, scheduled for

construction in 2012, will significantly improve operations at the intersection of 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Riverside Avenue.

**Niblick Road from Spring Street to South River Road** – This segment serves as the third major crossing of the Salinas River in the City, and is projected to have a daily capacity utilization of 104% in Year 2025. This corresponds to increased congestion, particularly during commute periods, as well as potential route changes to parallel routes and/or changes to the times people travel to avoid congestion. The projected capacity utilization of slightly more than 100% does not justify the widening of this roadway by 2025 but should be re-evaluated during the next Circulation Element update. If the bridge were widened, congestion would continue to occur at the intersections on either side of the bridge during some portion of the commute periods. Furthermore, widening the bridge to a 6-lane arterial would result in a capacity utilization of 71%, which would reduce vehicle delays, but would also support higher vehicle speeds and would conflict with the City's multi-modal goals and desire to maintain its small town character.

**Spring Street from Niblick Road to 24<sup>th</sup> Street** – Spring Street is the most heavily utilized corridor in the City to the west of Highway 101. This area is characterized by a well-developed grid network offering numerous routes of travel to most destinations. Grid systems are effective at distributing traffic and provide a more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly environment. Given the grid system's ability to distribute traffic, and the desire to maintain mobility for all modes, no widenings in the Downtown area are proposed. Potential operational improvements, such as signal timing and coordination and improved ramp access to Highway 101, should be studied by the City, as should the need to signalize intersections in the area.

**Creston Road** – In 2007 a draft Plan Line was developed for Creston Road from Riverside Avenue to Niblick Road/Sherwood Road. The study proposed a two-lane divided arterial section from River Road to Rolling Hills Road with use of roundabouts to improve pedestrian safety, bike safety and school access. The City should strive to adopt a Plan Line and incorporate recommended improvement projects into the capital improvement and impact fee programs.

## **CIRCULATION STANDARDS AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES**

### ***Standards and Specifications:***

The City maintains standards and specifications for the dedication (right of way width) and improvement of City streets. These standards are adopted by the City Council. The City's set of adopted engineering standards contains various street types and helps to define the City roadway system .

### **Plan Lines:**

Plan lines should be established, where necessary, to protect and implement the Circulation Element of the General Plan. Plan Lines provide:

- For safe, efficient and effective multi-modal transportation within the City.
- A source of information for residents, property owners and business owners.
- A basis of planning for building setbacks and development of adjacent properties.
- A basis for regulation and direction regarding the extension of existing and new arterial streets.

### ***Private Streets:***

Private streets are those which are not owned or maintained by the City. The City should discourage private streets where future growth patterns could call for full City standard streets. Appropriate applications for private streets include development in multifamily residential projects where traffic is limited to internal circulation needs. Private streets should provide equivalent structural integrity of public streets constructed from Standard Specifications.

### ***Traffic Signals:***

The City uses a warrant system to set priorities for installing traffic signals at intersections. The purpose of the warrant analysis is to provide a rational basis for identifying and prioritizing intersections with the greatest need for signal installation. At all intersections where warrants are met, an analysis shall be conducted to determine if a roundabout is a feasible or preferred alternative.

***Bridges:***

The Circulation Master Plan Map identifies all proposed bridge crossings of the Salinas River and Huerhuero Creek. The Parallel Routes Study focuses on Huerhuero crossings, and the City will determine the priority of bridges as development occurs. The City is not planning to widen any existing bridges prior to 2025. The City will update development fees so that new development will pay for its share of the need for new bridges.

***Sidewalks:***

Sidewalks or paths are required to be constructed on all public streets. LED lighted crosswalks are encouraged, particularly on routes to schools and/or public destinations where enhanced visibility is needed.

***Railroad Crossings:***

The City should coordinate with the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments and railroad operators to secure funding to improve all existing railroad crossings in the City for bicycle, pedestrian, and vehicular safety.

***Bike Lanes and Related Facilities:***

To further encourage bicycle travel as a means of reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT,) the City has established a system of bike lanes via adoption of a Bike Master Plan in 2009. The Bikeways Plan should be updated periodically to: 1) review system performance, 2) ensure that the City qualifies for all potential grant opportunities, and 3) update implementation priorities.

***Transportation Demand Management (TDM):***

The City should encourage firms located within the City limits to use flexible work hours (flex-time) and other traffic demand management strategies to reduce traffic congestion during typical commute periods. To the extent possible, companies should also be encouraged to share parking facilities with other adjacent uses through easement agreements. The City should also encourage residential developers to design and build project elements that support TDM such as car-share and bike-share facilities, neighborhood electric vehicle (NEV) operation, transit stop amenities, and neighborhood transportation centers. TDM elements can be required through the development agreement process and as optional mitigation to reduce anticipated traffic impacts.

***Paso Robles Event Center:***

The City should continue to coordinate with the Paso Robles Event Center, Highway Patrol, and private property owners to provide safe, efficient, and effective traffic flow and parking during the Mid-State Fair in July and August and during other major special events. The City should encourage regional bus service from southern communities in the County to the Paso Robles Event Center.

***Emergency Evacuation Routes:***

The City should continue to coordinate with the County, Highway Patrol, and other agencies to provide effective emergency evacuation routes for local, Countywide, and Statewide emergencies. The City should address emergency evacuation routes as part of the development of a community-wide Disaster Response Plan.

***Development Policies:***

As conditions of approval of Subdivision (Tract and Parcel Maps) and Development Plans (Planned Developments, Conditional Use Permits, and as applicable, Building Permits,) developers should be responsible for the following:

1. Incorporating circulation design elements that keep traffic “calm”, encourage walking and bicycling, and enhance the overall livability of the community. Circulation design elements may include differing pavement types, night lighting and traffic calming measures such as, but not limited to, landscaped traffic circles, medians, and narrow streets.



2. Dedication of a minimum of one half of the right of way of adjacent streets, as indicated by the Standard Details and Specifications adopted by the City Council. An adopted Plan Line will also provide direction for required dedications and building setbacks.
3. Improvement of any and all streets and alleys that border development sites, to the centerline plus 12-feet or beyond if necessary, to provide safe access in the judgment of the City Engineer. Medians should also be installed in accordance with the direction of the City Engineer.
4. Improvement of all interior and adjacent streets and alleys to City standards and specifications.
5. Provision of adequate access to all parcels, whether existing, proposed, or potential (from future subdivision) this may entail planning street extensions beyond the boundaries of a project.
6. Provision of adequate access for emergency vehicles and for emergency evacuation for each development phase.
7. Design of local streets and access to parcels in such a manner as to minimize impacts to safe and efficient traffic flow.
8. Design of streets to minimize grading.
9. Provision of off-site improvements where necessary to mitigate traffic impacts that may be created by a development project.
10. Construction of required street improvements prior to occupancy of new development.
11. Provision of shared driveways and parking lots where necessary to reduce the number of driveways into a street in order to reduce potential traffic conflicts.
12. Limited access on all arterials.
13. Payment of traffic mitigation fees adopted by the City Council, or as required for mitigation identified through an environmental review process.