BACKGROUND

A traffic signal is an electrically powered type of traffic control device installed at an intersection to more effectively regulate pedestrian and vehicular traffic flows. Traffic signals are placed at locations as designated by the Director of Streets and Traffic in accordance with Title 11, Chapter 11.16, Sections 11.16.060 and 11.16.070 of the Municipal Code.

PURPOSE

To state Council policy on the criteria to be used by the City of San José for the installation of traffic signals.

POLICY

It is the policy of the City Council that traffic signals shall be qualified for installation in accordance with the minimum criteria and priority ranking system established herein. Necessary measurements and computations for determining if such criteria are met and to establish and maintain a priority ranking list shall be the responsibility of the Director of Streets and Traffic.

MINIMUM CRITERIA

Only those intersections meeting the minimum criteria should be considered for installation of traffic signals. The minimum criteria for installation are satisfied when any one of the traffic signal warrants used by the California Department of Transportation is met.

PRIORITY SYSTEM

The Department of Streets and Traffic uses a point system to rank all intersections meeting the minimum criteria as described above. This ranking is used by the Director of Streets and Traffic to make recommendations for the installation of signals under various City improvement programs. It also provides a running inventory of intersections to be resurveyed periodically for significant changes in operating conditions. For each location meeting the minimum criteria numerical values are assigned to traffic-related priority factors to produce a single "priority number," which places the intersection on a signal priority list in order of relative desirability of a signal. The traffic-related priority factors are numbers and types of crashes, pedestrian volumes, proximity to elementary and middle schools, vehicle volumes, critical speed, observed traffic delay/congestion and projected impacts of signalization on pedestrian and traffic flows. The Director of Streets and Traffic shall determine and fix the point values assigned to the traffic-related priority factors.

ENGINEERING JUDGMENT

If the Director of Streets and Traffic determines based on a traffic signal warrants study and/or traffic study, and in the exercise of sound engineering judgment, that signalization will be detrimental to traffic and pedestrian flows, the Director is authorized not to recommend an otherwise warranted location for signal installation. Conversely, if the Director of Streets and Traffic determines based upon a traffic signal warrants study and/or a traffic study, and in the exercise of sound engineering judgment, that installing a signal at an otherwise
unwarranted or low-ranking location will have a significant beneficial effect on traffic and pedestrian flow, the
Director is authorized to recommend the location for signalization. In the event of unexpected additional
funding, or other events giving rise to the interest in specific signal locations, the normal review process and
priority system would be followed prior to Council approval of such additional signals.