

1. Policy for Traffic Impact Studies

POLICY

This policy is to provide for consistency in the preparation of traffic impact studies using certain established criteria. It has been prepared for the purpose of assisting consultants, developers and others interested in evaluating traffic impacts within the Adams County. Consultants are invited to discuss proposed projects with the County Highway Commissioner prior to beginning the analysis. Doing so will provide an opportunity to discuss and determine parameters to be used and open a communication link between County staff and the developer/consultant. This communication will help in creating land uses with traffic characteristics that are in the best interest of the entire County.

All final submittals for traffic studies and/or reports shall be signed and sealed by a Wisconsin Registered Civil Engineer.

Traffic Impact Study Criteria

1. Purpose of a traffic impact study
 - a. To determine what impact traffic traveling to and from the site will have on nearby streets.
 - b. To determine what specific traffic problems can be anticipated.
 - c. To determine what roadway or signal improvements can alleviate the anticipated traffic problems.
 - d. To determine the cost of the improvements needed to alleviate the anticipated traffic problems.

2. Minimum Thresholds for a required traffic impact study
 - a. The following thresholds shall be used:
 1. 50 single-family homes.
 2. 30 multi-family homes.
 3. 30,000 square feet general office space.
 4. 10,000 square feet retail space.
 - b. For developments less than the above thresholds, the following mitigating factors may necessitate a traffic study:
 1. High traffic volumes on the adjacent roadway that may effect movement into or out of the site.
 2. Lack of existing left turn lane(s) on the adjacent roadway at the proposed access drive.
 3. Inadequate horizontal or vertical sight distance at access points.
 4. The proximity of the proposed access points to other existing drives or intersections.
 5. The proposed use is a special use or conditional use zoning classification.
 6. The proposed use involves a drive through operation.
 7. Increased pedestrian and/or recreational traffic, i.e. bicycle, ATV, etc.
 8. Other mitigating factors identified by the County Highway Commissioner.

3. Financial responsibility

- a. Traffic studies must be provided at the developer's expense. The County will either designate a traffic consultant or allow the developers to hire their own traffic consultant. The County must approve the selected consultant.
- b. The County may review the traffic impact study in-house or elect to choose a consultant to perform an independent review. The review consultant would be hired at the Developer's expense.

4. Study contents

- a. Scope of the traffic impact study will be determined before proceeding with the study. Elements which need to be determined include the following:
 1. Traffic related issues or problems identified by County staff need to be addressed in the traffic impact study.
 2. The study area, or geographical area to be included in the study needs to be identified. It should be large enough to include all significant impacts of the proposed development. At a minimum, the area should include the adjacent controlled intersections.
 3. Time frame- Projected traffic demands should be based on fully occupied conditions. For multi-phase developments, traffic demands at the end of each phase should be determined.
 4. Other factors- Non-site traffic growth in the study area, pedestrian traffic, school traffic, programmed transportation improvements, and other miscellaneous factors should be considered where appropriate.
- b. Outline of traffic impact study contents:

The following is an outline of what should be included in an impact study.

 - I. Introduction
 - a. Letter of transmission identifying who did report for whom.
 - b. Description of proposed land use and building floor space in development.
 - c. Identification of peak hours and whether weekday or Saturday, to be used in impact analysis.
 - d. Description of study area.
 - e. Location of proposed access points.
 - II. Base traffic conditions
 - a. Description of road network and intersections in vicinity of site specifically at the access points.
 - b. Counts during peak-impact hours.
 - c. Gap or queue length studies, if appropriate.
 - III. Site traffic generation
 - a. Trip generation rates used and source.
 - b. Traffic generated during peak-impact hours.
 - IV. Site traffic distributions
 - a. Method used.
 - b. Table or figure showing estimated site traffic movements by direction.
 - c. Discussion of method used for traffic assignment and assumptions used for assignment of traffic to network.

- V. Non-site traffic projections
 - a. Definition of design year (opening of proposed development or other agreed upon points in item).
 - b. Identification of developments in study area whose traffic is to be included in impact calculations.
 - c. Adjustment of off-site through traffic volumes, if needed, using agreed upon growth rate.
 - d. Assembling of off-site traffic forecast for design year, if needed.

- VI. Traffic assignments
 - a. Assignment of peak period traffic to intersections and access points.
 - b. Figures for existing peak impact hours traffic, site traffic, and total traffic.
 - c. Recommended access design and improvements.

- VII. Review of site plan
 - a. Internal reservoir at access points.
 - b. Parking layout.
 - c. Loading dock locations and access, including design truck used.
 - d. Recommended changes.

- VIII. Discussion of future traffic conditions (if needed)
 - a. Through traffic growth.
 - b. Other developments in area.

- IX. Summary of findings and recommendations (may be listed in outline for at beginning of report). The final report should include all assumptions and data used in the technical analyses. Any recommendations in the report should be reviewed with County staff before presentation at a public meeting or hearing.