

INTERCHANGE DESIGN

Because of the wide variety of site conditions, traffic volumes, highway types and interchange layouts, the warrants which justify an interchange may differ at each location. The six major factors to be considered are:

1. Control of access
2. Elimination of bottlenecks or spot congestion
3. Elimination of hazards
4. Site topography
5. Road user benefits
6. Traffic volumes

Other than on a freeway, the inability to provide the necessary capacity with an at-grade intersection is a common warrant for an interchange.

More detailed warrants and general types of interchanges may be found in Chapter X "Grade Separations and Interchanges" of AASHTO's A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets.

REFINING HORIZONTAL ALIGNMENT

Horizontal alignment is to be reviewed for possible revisions due to information received under Section 2B-1- GROUND SURVEY such as: obvious areas of unsuitable material and/or rock, major utility facility relocations and environmental considerations (such as splitting communities, splitting watersheds, conflicts with National or State Forests and Parks, historical property, archaeological sites, recreational areas, sites affected by noise beyond acceptable limits, etc.). The 2009 General Assembly passed Chapter 120 (HB 2577), which amends the Code of Virginia by adding in Article 15 of Chapter 1 of Title 33.2 a section numbered 33.2-276, relating to highway noise abatement. The law provides that, for any highway construction or improvement project that includes, or may include, requirements for the mitigation of traffic noise impacts, VDOT should consider, but is not required to implement, noise reducing design techniques, such as shifting the horizontal alignment away from the noise sensitive receptors.

Horizontal alignment must remain within acceptable limits as prescribed in the Geometric Design Standards (See [Appendix A, Section A-1](#)) unless an authorized [exception](#) is made by the State Location and Design Engineer and, if applicable, the Federal Highway Administration.

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