

Therefore, in the selection of a median width, the function(s) the median is to serve must be thoroughly evaluated and balanced* with the economic, environmental and other impacts.

Depressed median widths of 60 feet or greater are preferred on freeways and other high speed rural principal arterials with shoulders and ditches where greater separation of opposing traffic is desired. A 60 foot median allows for two future inside travel lanes, left (inside) shoulders, barrier and more efficient drainage and snow removal. Side slopes should be 6:1; however, 4:1 slopes may be adequate based on [Appendix A, Section A-1](#) GS Standards. When depressed medians are used on higher speed facilities, such as freeways and other high speed principal arterials, a median barrier is not necessary as long as the median is wide enough to provide the required clear zone and recovery area (see AASHTO's *Roadside Design Guide* for selection and use of median barriers). Additional clearance may be required to provide the minimum stopping sight distance along the median lane on relatively short radius curves, when a median barrier is used.

Raised medians have application in urban areas with curb or curb and gutter where it is desirable to regulate left turn movements. Raised medians have been found to be advantageous under the following conditions:

1. High volume of through traffic
2. Little strip development or mid-block left turn demand
3. Reasonable indirect access available to serve adjoining properties
4. Undeveloped areas composed of large land parcels
5. Areas where sight distance limitations prevent the use of a two-way left-turn median

For new construction, the minimum raised median width in urban areas with a curb or curb and gutter is 40 feet. A 40 foot median allows for two future inside lanes and a 16 foot raised median. The 16 foot raised median then allows for a future left turn lane with a 4 foot raised median remaining. The wider the median, the better, but with particular attention being given to the operational characteristics of at-grade intersections. Also, [clear zone requirements](#) for a particular facility should have significance in the assessment of the median width.

The curb of raised medians shall be offset 1 foot from the through lane edge. Raised medians should have a minimum width of 4 feet. When the raised median's primary purpose is to provide space for speed change/left turn storage, the minimum width shall be the required lane width plus 4 feet (i.e. 12 foot lane + 4 feet = 16 feet total width).

All raised medians wider than 6 feet are to be seeded, unless they are deemed to create an unnecessary maintenance problem.

* Rev. 7/15