



## DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BULLETIN

**Bulletin No.** 4-2020

**Subject:** Traffic counts affected by COVID-19 Pandemic

**Resource:** Transportation Planning Section, Countywide Planning Division

**Date:** September 3, 2020

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In April 2020 the Prince George's County Planning Board passed resolution No. 2020-53, which prohibited traffic counts for use in traffic impact studies that were collected between March 15, and September 10, 2020. Additionally, the resolution permitted the use of traffic counts that were one-to-three years old if a growth factor derived from historic traffic data was used.

This temporary policy was developed to provide time for County, State, and Federal efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19 and bring about a prompt return of pre-COVID-19 conditions resulting in traffic volumes similar to those in the County prior to March 2020. As it stands, there have been no significant changes in traffic volumes. While it is unclear exactly when traffic will return to pre-March 2020 levels, it is likely that growth in traffic will occur gradually over time.

The Transportation Review Guidelines indicate that "traffic data must reflect existing normal peak-hour conditions at the time of the study." Recent data from the Maryland State Highway Administration show that current traffic volumes have leveled off at approximately 83% of traffic compared with 2019. These volumes, while lower than the pre-March 2020 volumes, reflect the existing normal peak-hour conditions. The current traffic count moratorium will not extend beyond September 10, 2020.

Traffic impact studies submitted after September 10, 2020 may use traffic counts collected after September 10, 2020 with a 1.04 adjustment factor to take the Prince George's County Public School building closure and remote learning practice into account. Should County public schools reopen and remote learning be replaced with full-time in-person instruction, traffic counts may be used without an adjustment factor and in accordance with the Transportation Review Guidelines. Counts collected between March 15 and September 10, 2020 will not be accepted.

If a traffic impact study for a development application was submitted between March 15 and September 10, 2020. The following practices will apply:

If the counts were not adjusted in accordance with PGCPB No. 2020-53, are less than one-year-old as of 9/3/2020, and will expire *after* 12/31/2020, the traffic study may be accepted until the traffic counts expire (become older than one year).

If the counts were not adjusted in accordance with PGCPB No. 2020-53, are less than one-year-old as of 9/3/2020, and will expire *before* 12/31/2020, the traffic study may be accepted until the traffic counts expire (become older than one year), or until 12/31/2020 if the expired counts are adjusted consistent with PGCPB No. 2020-53.

If the counts were adjusted in accordance with PGCPB No. 2020-53, the traffic impact study may be accepted until 12/31/2020 and shall be re-evaluated against the Transportation Review Guidelines if there is potential for the development case to be accepted after 12/31/2020.

Should you have any questions regarding traffic studies, please do not hesitate to contact the Transportation Planning Section, 301-952-3680.