



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
Office of Infrastructure

AASHTO *A Policy on Design Standards* *Interstate* *System*

Overview of what changed
between the 2005 and
2016 versions



General

- Current version 2016
- Last updated January 2005
- Clarifies minimum standards vs suggested values
- Units of measure presented as:
English (Metric)

Revisions

- Design Traffic and Number of Lanes
 - Provides more flexibility in the selection of the appropriate hourly volume in the design year to be used for design
 - Removes specific references to Level of Service, referring more generally to operational analysis and providing more flexibility in existing corridors.


Revisions

- Access Control
 - Clarifies that access to ramps is to be fully controlled
 - Retains 100' (urban) and 300' (rural) as minimum access control along crossroads
 - Discusses variables influencing the length of need for extending access control, such as:
 - functional classification of the crossroad
 - Traffic volumes
 - type of access (right in/out, etc.)
 - number of lanes
 - design of medians and turn lanes
 - observed and predicted safety and operational performance

Revisions

- Core geometrics
 - Remains same: Design Speed, Lane Width
 - Refers to Green Book: Sight Distance, Curvature, Superelevation
 - Gradient: Removed footnote to table
 - Shoulder Width:
 - Requires 10' left shoulder for 3-lanes or more in level/rolling terrain.
 - If truck traffic >250 DDHV, wider shoulder may be beneficial but removed reference to 12' width that “should be considered.”
 - Cross Slope
 - Added references to drainage needs
 - Limit cross slope break to 8% in superelevated sections

Revisions

- Medians
 - Increased recommended minimum width in rural areas from 36' to 50' to reduce cross median crashes
 - Recommend not draining medians across travel lanes and refer to AASHTO Drainage Manual
- Roadside Design
 - Removed references to Horizontal Clearance to Obstructions
 - Refer to Roadside Design Guide for clear zone
- Multimodal Accommodations 
 - Consider providing or reserving space for bike/pedestrian use on crossroad

Revisions

- Interchanges
 - Recommended spacing (1 mi urban, 3 mi rural) stays the same with added language to consider geometric design, operations, safety performance and signing
- Bridges and Other Structures
 - Vertical Clearance: Clarified that minimum VC applies to aux lanes & shoulders, ramps and C-D roads.
 - Replaced “single interstate routing” discussion with text regarding “through movements”
 - Reminds reader of IH use by military
 - New and replacement bridges to meet LRFD Bridge Design Specifications



Revisions

- Tunnels (coordinated with SCOBS T-20)
 - Added note to consider overhead features and future resurfacing needs when computing vertical clearance.
 - Added language to consider tunneling methodology when designing horizontal curves
 - Width of safety walkway increased from 2.5' to 4' for ADA compliance, but only required on one side.
 - Reference added to NFPA 502 *Standard for Road Tunnels, Bridges, and Other Limited Access Highways*