



## Fairfax County Department of Transportation

# Technical Bulletin

**Subject:** Requirements Regarding Operational Analysis (OA) Submittals and Traffic Impact Analysis/OA Determination Requests

**Date:** 2/14/19

**No.:** 19-03

**Summary:** To facilitate a comprehensive review of zoning applications that fall below the daily trip generation thresholds established by the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) has established a policy requiring the submission of an Operational Analysis (OA) for all such zoning applications (rezoning, special exceptions, special permits and amendments to the same) for sites that generate 2,500 or more but less than 5,000 vehicles per day (VPD), or that generate 250 vehicles per hour (VPH) or more on adjacent street(s).

**Effective Date:** Immediately.

**Background:** In 2013, following actions by the Virginia General Assembly, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) issued revised Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) Administrative Guidelines (Administrative Guidelines) that include changes to the traffic volume thresholds that trigger the need for an official VDOT review of the impact of a zoning proposal. For detailed background on the Virginia requirements for a TIA, the Administrative Guidelines are available for review at [virginiadot.org](http://virginiadot.org) on their Traffic Impact Analysis Regulations page. Generally, prior to 2013, VDOT required an analysis when the zoning application generated more than 100 new residential trips per peak hour or, for all other uses, 2,500 new vehicle trips per day or 250 new trips in the peak hour. The updated requirements in the Administrative Guidelines have largely resulted in a single threshold of 5,000 vehicles per day to warrant an official VDOT review of the traffic impact.

During the locality review period of the intended changes in the Administrative Guidelines, FCDOT recognized that it would be necessary to develop criteria for local review of the impact of zoning proposals for those applications that generate less than 5,000 trips per day, but are still likely to have a transportation network impact. To address this, FCDOT has determined that a submission of a traffic analysis is necessary for zoning proposals that generate 2,500 VPD or more, but fewer than 5,000 VPD, or that generate 250 VPH on adjacent street(s). A separate designation of OA is used to reference these submittals, and differentiate from that of the VDOT TIA. Discussion of the criteria for an OA continues below.

While “TIA” is the term used for an analysis that meets the VDOT qualifications for a required Commonwealth review of the traffic impact of a zoning proposal, “OA” refers generally to traffic analyses that meet the County threshold for review of the impact of the zoning proposal.

OAs involve VDOT review of the study, but the County guides this effort. For those applications that generate less than 2,500 VPD or less than 250 VPH on adjacent street(s), FCDOT will coordinate with the applicant's representatives to determine if a much smaller-scale analysis may be required and to define the specific issues which may be analyzed. A VDOT review of these analyses may be necessary.

**Administration of the OA Process:** The Administrative Guidelines and other VDOT requirements for the TIA submission process will continue to be administered with the OA process. This includes VDOT participation in scoping and review of the analysis associated with a zoning proposal. We also intend to follow the Commonwealth regulations regarding the timelines of review for the original submittal and revisions. There are some differences between the VDOT regulations and guidance and the County-managed OA process that are defined here:

- The thresholds for submission of an OA consist of one of the following:
  - o Average Daily Trips (ADT) for the subject site are equal to or greater than 2,500 VPD, but less than 5,000 VPD, based on the current ITE *Trip Generation* rates/equations
  - o Peak hour trip impact by the generator to adjacent streets is 250 vehicles or greater
- If the zoning proposal is an amendment that proposes no changes to the approved proffers, but otherwise meets the threshold for an OA, the requirement for an OA will be evaluated and determined by FCDOT
- With VDOT input, FCDOT will make the final determination on whether a resubmission(s) of the OA will need to be provided
- FCDOT will schedule all post-submission discussions with VDOT and the zoning applicant/consultant
- Final approval of alternative methods of analysis in the OA to those included in the VDOT guidelines are determined by FCDOT
- FCDOT will generate any official correspondence or assessment regarding the OA with input from VDOT as necessary. FCDOT intends to formally indicate that the OA review is complete and that the OA is satisfactory

There are currently no fees associated with the review of an OA.

Any questions regarding the TIA/OA administrative process and/or the process used to determine the need for a TIA should be directed to FCDOT by calling Michelle Guthrie at 703-877-5711.

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