



Fairfax County Development of Transportation

Technical Bulletin

Subject: Update to Comprehensive Transportation Analysis – Zoning Process

Date: May 6, 2025

Summary: The Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) is updating the County's process regarding trip thresholds and analysis types for Comprehensive Transportation Analyses associated with zoning proposals (CTA-Z). This document includes the new trip thresholds that trigger an analysis, the new tiers of analysis, and the criteria by which a zoning proposal may require a CTA-Z.

Effective Date: Immediately

Background: In 2019, FCDOT established a policy (2019 thresholds) 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 fewer than 5,000 average daily trips (ADT), or that generate 250 vehicles per hour (VPH) or more on adjacent street(s). This policy was established to facilitate a traffic impact analysis for zoning proposals that do not meet the 5,000 ADT threshold for a Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Chapter 870 Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) but are still likely to have a transportation network impact. The difference between these two analyses is further explained on the FCDOT website, [Transportation Analysis | Transportation \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](#).

In 2022, FCDOT pursued the initiative to revamp the OA by recalibrating the modal emphasis of how studies were produced. Historically, studies were focused primarily on vehicular (automotive) analysis related to the proposed development. FCDOT and the County felt it important to consider and evaluate the needs and impacts of all modes, including automotive, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit, to promote an equitable, multimodal transportation network. To facilitate this for zoning proposals, FCDOT created a checklist of new elements of analysis and changed the OA name to Comprehensive Transportation Analysis – Zoning (CTA-Z). This checklist has acted as Phase 1 for the revamp of County led transportation analyses to include and analyze pedestrian, bicycle, and transit modes, in addition to the automotive/vehicular mode, to identify all modal facilities for improvement during the development process.

As of summer 2024, the 2019 thresholds have been in effect to determine if a CTA-Z is required. However, FCDOT recognized that the 2019 thresholds for a CTA-Z were formerly established with a focus on vehicular traffic impact analysis and were modeled after an outdated VDOT threshold for a TIA per regulations prior to 2013. This prompted a reevaluation of the 2019 thresholds to better align with the multimodal initiative of Phase 1 and current industry best practices. As part of Phase 2, FCDOT seeks to establish new thresholds

and tiers of analysis to adequately facilitate multi-modal transportation assessments and to right-size the scope of analysis based on the magnitude of a zoning proposal. The Phase 2 effort also responds to feedback from industry, the Board of Supervisors, and the public regarding the uncertainty of when an analysis, and what type of analysis, would be produced with zoning proposals.

To this end, FCDOT reviewed approved non-TIA studies from the past eight years to understand what outcomes were determined and what mitigations were recommended from those studies. Based on available records, there were 39 non-TIA studies over that eight-year period. Only one study identified a capacity need, which was isolated to the site ingress/egress. The other studies had either no capacity need identified or a mitigation that would have otherwise been identified through other non-CTA-Z/TIA review processes. There were no studies from this dataset that recommended any unique, offsite capacity mitigation(s), reaffirming FCDOT's decision to further refine and implement analysis tiers.

With this information, FCDOT reflected on how to evolve the CTA-Z process to meet the multimodal initiative of Phase 1 and right-size studies commensurate with their character and scale. Research had been conducted on the most common thresholds for transportation analyses from a recommended practice document published in 2023 by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) called, *Multimodal Transportation Impact Analysis for Site Development*. In conjunction with ITE guidance, industry feedback, and the data gathered from the past eight years, FCDOT is establishing new thresholds and analysis tiers.

Updated CTA-Z Process: The proposed updates to the CTA-Z process are the following:

- There will be three tiers of analysis for a CTA-Z.
 - o Tier 1 Transportation Statement
 - o Tier 2 CTA-Z
 - o Tier 3 CTA-Z
- The following will be the new thresholds for each tier as net new trips regarding a zoning proposal:
 - o If the proposed development generates 999 ADT or fewer, a Tier 1 Transportation Statement is required.
 - o If the proposed development generates 1,000 ADT or more but fewer than 3,000 ADT, a Tier 2 CTA-Z is required.
 - o If the proposed development generates 3,000 ADT or more but fewer than 5,000 ADT, a Tier 3 CTA-Z is required.
 - o If the proposed development application generates 5,000 ADT or more, a VDOT TIA is required.
- Tier 1 Transportation Statement should include the following supplemental transportation information as a separate document before or as part of the application acceptance package:
 - o Site Description and Proposal
 - o Description of Vehicular and Pedestrian Access

- Trip Generation or Approximate Number of Employees/Residents/Students/Customers/etc.
- Prior Site Transportation Mitigations and Agreements (if applicable)
- Proffered or Planned Transportation Improvements at Adjacent Intersections (if applicable)
- Qualitative Description of Vehicular, Accessible, and Bicycle Parking
- Tier 2 CTA-Z should include the following elements:
 - Tier 1 Transportation Statement Information
 - Pre-Scoping Document, Including Information from the Required Scoping Meeting.
 - CTA-Z Non-Auto Assessment
 - Site Access/Perimeter Vehicular Analysis
- Tier 3 CTA-Z should include the following elements:
 - Tier 1 and Tier 2 CTA-Z Information
 - Additional Study Intersections for Vehicular Analysis (determined at scoping)
- The latest edition of ITE's *Trip Generation Manual* will be used to determine the trips generated by the existing and proposed developments. This includes an assessment of the daily weekend trips.
- If the latest ITE manual does not provide a land use code for the proposed zoning application, then the Applicant, subject to FCDOT approval, may use alternative published guides or local trip generation studies.
- CTA-Z does not require a processing fee.

Administration of the CTA-Z Process: The TIA Administrative Guidelines and other VDOT requirements for the TIA submission process will continue to be administered with the CTA-Z 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. For detailed background on the Virginia requirements for a TIA, the Administrative Guidelines are available for review at [Administrative Guidelines for the Traffic Impact Analysis Regulations | Virginia Department of Transportation](#) on their TIA Administrative Guidelines page.

As stipulated in Article 8-100 of the Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance, a request for CTA-Z or TIA determinations must be submitted to FCDOT prior to the acceptance of a zoning application by the Department of Planning and Development (DPD). For FCDOT to complete its determination, the following materials need to be submitted with any determination request:

- Tax Map ID/location address (if the property does not have a street address, include the street name and closest intersection)
- A statement of justification or trip generation memorandum, if available. If not, a detailed description and plan of what is being proposed.
- Trip generation reductions for proposed developments regarding a CTA-Z or TIA determination should follow the same guidance as outlined in the VDOT TIA Administrative Guidelines.

- If trip reductions from a previously approved zoning case are assumed, detailed information on the rationale for the reduced trips must be submitted (i.e. the original zoning case number and subsequent amendments, development plans, proffer interpretations, etc.)

If there is modification to the density or level of uses during the zoning application review process that will increase ADT from the initial determination, FCDOT will reassess the need for a CTA-Z or TIA, and the applicant should provide appropriate documentation outlined above.

Any questions regarding the CTA-Z process should be directed to FCDOT by calling Jeremy Ko at (703) 877-5831 or via email at jeremy.ko@fairfaxcounty.gov.

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