



Managing Traffic for Improved Access to Voting Events

Document Purpose

The Federal Highway (FHWA) Office of Operations supporting the use of traffic analysis and enhanced work zone management to improve access to voting events. This effort aids the Department of Transportation’s (USDOT’s) support for [Executive Order \(EO\) 14019 Promoting Access to Voting](#).

This document provides a list of resources related to work zone management to aid State and local agencies in identifying and better managing and mitigating potential work zone impacts to all users during voting events.

Resources Related to Work Zone Management

The resources are grouped into the following four categories:

- [Initial Diagnostic Assessment of Project/Voting Day Conflicts](#)
- [Work Zone Planning and Design](#)
- [Agency Business Processes, Contract Specifications](#)
- [Voting Day Impact Mitigation Strategies](#)

Within these categories, distinctions are sometimes made between those that pertain to the movement of traffic and those that pertain to the movement of vulnerable (e.g., non-motorized) users of the roadway network around the voting centers. The following tables describe the issues of concern in each category along with resources available that assist with those issues or provide examples of how they are addressed. Other steps listed under the traffic analyses for voting events resources may also be pertinent to work zone management considerations as well.



Initial Diagnostic Assessment of Project/Voting Day Conflicts

Goal Relative to Voting Events: Perform an initial assessment whether a planned project's location and timing may impact accessibility to voting locations on voting event days. Similarly, reviewing travel conditions on past voting days may identify potential issues that have arisen during in-house maintenance work, or permitted work by utilities, vertical construction, etc.

Potential Issues of Concern:

- Will the project timeline overlap one or more voting event days?
- Will the project impact one or more facilities that typically experience unusual demand on voting days?
- Will the project potentially affect transit service, mobility services, etc., that would be used by those traveling to voting locations?
- Does the project include components that could potentially disrupt travel paths to voting locations used by vulnerable (non-motorized) road users?

Potential Actions:

- Review experiences of any other projects or work activities recently performed in the same corridor or region when a voting event occurred. Identify any complaints received about accessibility.
- Review travel conditions that existed around those projects and/or those in-house or permitted work activities during past voting events to identify any significant adverse travel impacts that occurred.
- Leverage past, related experiences to conduct an initial assessment of the planned project to identify potential accessibility and mobility impacts to voting locations on voting days.

Available Resources:

- The [National Performance Management Research Data Set \(NPMRDS\)](#) provides vehicle probe-based travel time data for passenger vehicles and trucks in 5-minute increments for all National Highway System roadways. This historical data can be reviewed and may show traffic conditions on facilities of interest during past voting events.
- All State highway agencies collect traffic volume data through traffic counting programs and report their data to FHWA on a monthly basis. The raw data can be found at the [U.S. Traffic Volume Data](#) website. The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Public Data Portal also provides a tool to visualize the data, located at [FHWA Travel Monitoring Analysis System](#). The visualization tool is helpful for viewing traffic flow intensity by hour of day if an individual count station is close enough to past project locations or to the planned project location to home in on when traffic conditions may be at their worst.



- Many States have 511 traveler information websites that show real-time traffic conditions for many roadways. A user can review traffic conditions of their area of interest throughout the day in order to screen for locations and times of day that could potentially be problem locations during voting events. The FHWA has a [website showing where 511 traveler information services are available](#).
- If unusual travel conditions are detected, information in a project diary may yield useful insights into the actual project activities and conditions present on the day of voting that caused the unusual travel conditions.



Work Zone Planning and Design

Goal Relative to Voting Events: Ensure that consideration of potential work zone impacts on voting days are adequately considered during the project planning and Transportation Management Plan (TMP) design phase.

Potential Issues of Concern:

- The planned TMP during each voting event may not be capable of adequately accommodating deviations to the normal vehicular travel patterns that occur on the day of voting.
- Work zone-induced constraints to vulnerable road user pathways may adversely affect accessibility to voting centers.

Potential Actions:

- Assess project schedule to estimate TMP phase(s) likely to exist when voting event(s) are expected to occur.
- Performing sensitivity analyses of assumptions used during impact analyses to stress test the resilience of the TMP to potential travel pattern changes of all users on voting days.
- Conduct public information and outreach activities to ensure all road users are aware of potential work zone impacts (lane or road closures, sidewalk closures, etc.)

Available Resources:

- [Work Zone Impacts Assessment—An Approach to Assess and Manage Work Zone Safety and Mobility Impacts of Road Projects \(FHWA-HOP-05-068\)](#)
- [Using Modeling and Simulation Tools for Work Zone Analysis](#)
- [Developing and Implementing Transportation Management Plans for Work Zones \(FHWA-HOP-09-038\)](#)
- [Developing Transportation Management Plans for Work Zones – Training Course \(FHWA-HOP-12-037\)](#)
- [Guidelines for Work Zone Designers – Pedestrian and Bicycle Accommodation](#)
- [Pedestrian Considerations: Updated Checklist for Temporary Traffic Control Zones](#)
- [Work Zone Public Information and Outreach Strategies \(FHWA-HOP-05-067\)](#)
- [Traffic Analysis Toolbox Volume XII: Work Zone Traffic Analysis – Applications and Decision Framework \(FHWA-HOP-12-009\)](#)



Agency Business Processes, Contract Specifications

Goal Relative to Voting Events: Incorporation of appropriate language into agency business processes, construction contracts, and permits impacting the travel can ensure that work activities around voting centers on voting days do not adversely affect accessibility to those centers by any and all users.

Potential Issues of Concern:

- Are procedures in place to limit or coordinate agency in-house maintenance force work activities so that they do not impede access to voting centers by any users on voting days?
- Have specifications been incorporated into construction contracts to limit road, lane, ramp, and sidewalk/pathway closures that impact access to voting centers on voting days?
- Are procedures in place to ensure that permits issued for right-of-way access do not impede access to voting centers by any users on voting days?

Potential Actions:

- Assess, and modify as needed, agency business processes, training, and coordination/collaboration efforts to ensure identification and mitigation of potential impacts of work activities to voting centers on voting days.
- Assess, and modify as needed, standard construction contract and permit language to ensure identification and mitigation of potential impacts of work activities to voting centers on voting days.

Available Resources:

- [Work Zone Management Capability Maturity Framework](#)
- [Guide to Project Coordination for Minimizing Work Zone Mobility Impacts \(FHWA-HOP-16-013\)](#)
- The Virginia DOT includes the following statement in their construction contracts:

“No lane closure shall be permitted within one mile in either direction of a polling location on any scheduled election day between the hours of 5:00 AM to 8:00 p.m.”



Voting Day Impact Mitigation Strategies

Goal Relative to Voting Events: Ensuring that appropriate strategies are considered and implemented as deemed appropriate to mitigate potential travel and accessibility impacts to voting centers on voting days caused by work zones.

Potential Issues of Concern:

- Have project schedules slipped enough to create potential impacts affecting access to voting centers due to travel pattern changes on voting days?
- Have strategies been identified and implemented to mitigate those voting day impacts?

Potential Actions:

- Identify alternatives to mitigate unanticipated impacts to voting center access due to project schedule slippages
- Monitor traffic conditions through and around the voting location and the project location.
- Establish, and implement as needed, contingency plans for accommodate unexpected bottlenecks due to travel pattern changes, incidents within constrained work zones, non-compliance with restrictions to voter center access roadways and sidewalks/pathways, etc.
- Perform a post-event critique of impacts and effectiveness of mitigation strategies and contingency plans that were implemented.

Available Resources:

- [Developing and Implementing Transportation Management Plans for Work Zones \(FHWA-HOP-05-066\)](#)
- [Guide to Project Coordination for Minimizing Work Zone Mobility Impacts \(FHWA-HOP-16-013\)](#)
- [Work Zone Operations Best Practices Guidebook \(Third Edition\) \(FHWA-HOP-13-012\)](#)
- [Traffic Incident Management in Construction and Maintenance Work Zones \(FHWA-HOP-08-056\)](#)
- [Guidance on Using Traffic Management Centers for Work Zone Management \(FHWA-HOP-15-032\)](#)
- [Work Zone Intelligent Transportation Systems Implementation Guide \(FHWA-HOP-14-008\)](#)
- [Pedestrian Considerations: Updated Checklist for Temporary Traffic Control Zones](#)
- [Pedestrian Accommodation in Work Zones: A Field Guide](#)
- [Guidelines on Motorcycle and Bicycle Work Zone Safety](#)



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