

PROJECT COUNTS IN THE TIME OF COVID • OTDMUG, DECEMBER 3, 2021



OHIO DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION

WHY WERE GUIDELINES NEEDED?

- From March 2020 through April 2020 traffic in Ohio dropped 45% from the same period in 2019
- New projects were coming in, new counts were needed

WEREN'T COUNTS AVAILABLE?

- Some locations were due to be counted in 2020 as part of ODOT count program
- ODOT count program doesn't include intersections
- Forecasting count guidelines call for counts within last 3 years

CONSIDERATIONS FOR USING GUIDELINES

- Factors were not required for counts that were within 15% of pre-pandemic volumes
- If a project is evaluated again post-pandemic new counts are required
- Submitted forecasts must follow steps 1&2 of the guidelines to show how close the counts were to pre-pandemic volumes

GENERAL PROCEDURE

- **Step 1: evaluate existing counts**
 - availability, age, location
- **Step 2: collect new counts**
 - Collect new tube counts and TMC's as needed
 - Tube counts should be collected as close to locations of old counts as possible
 - Counts must follow existing Modeling & Forecasting guidelines

GENERAL PROCEDURE CON'T.

- **Step 3: create project specific factors**
 - Compare new counts at “factor stations” with old counts
 - Create Daily and AM/PM peak hour factors
 - Daily factor effectively replaces seasonal factor
- **Step 4: apply the factors**
 - Factors should be from same road & as close as possible to count location
 - Similar sites or averages can be used where necessary

GENERAL PROCEDURE CON'T.

- **Step 5: turning movement adjustments**
 - Intended to correct for traffic shifts seen when comparing old to new counts
 - Use StreetLight data to collect turning movement data
 - Use both pre & post COVID data
 - Pre-COVID is February 2020 or older
 - Post-COVID is most recent month
 - Make adjustments when turning movement percentages are off by more than 10%

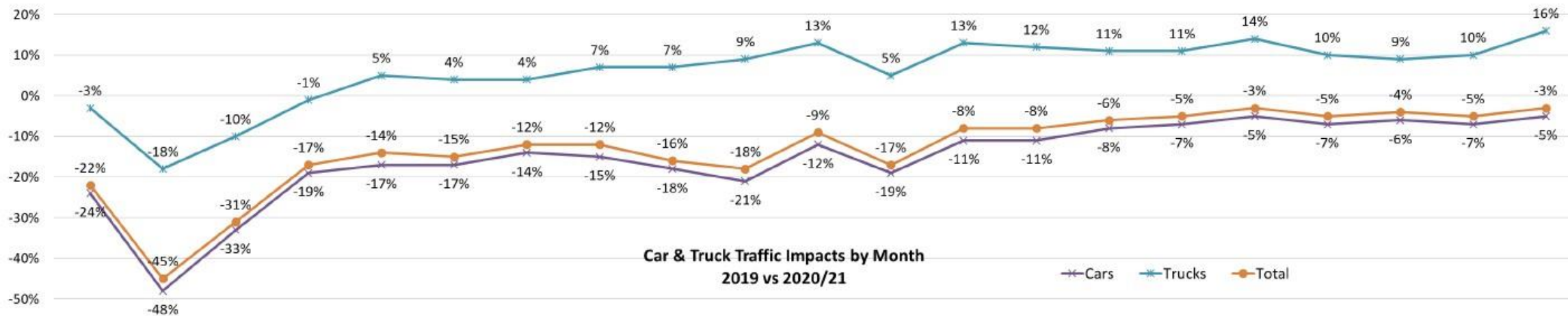
THE NEW NORMAL?

- From June 2020 through November 2020 the total traffic decline ranged from -17% to -12%
- As of November 2020 the guidelines became optional in most cases
- Exceptions were made on case-by-case basis, usually involving low volume areas with low growth

TRAFFIC TRENDS

- Traffic Monitoring group in Tech Services provides regular updates showing state average of Trucks, Cars, and total volumes vs. 2019 averages
 - They also have an interactive map which allows you to look at more localized trends

STATE AVERAGE TRAFFIC DECREASES



	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	August 2020	September 2020	October 2020	November 2020	December 2020	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021	July 2021	August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021
Cars	-24%	-48%	-33%	-19%	-17%	-17%	-14%	-15%	-18%	-21%	-12%	-19%	-11%	-11%	-8%	-7%	-5%	-7%	-6%	-7%	-5%
Trucks	-3%	-18%	-10%	-1%	5%	4%	4%	7%	7%	9%	13%	5%	13%	12%	11%	11%	14%	10%	9%	10%	16%
Total	-22%	-45%	-31%	-17%	-14%	-15%	-12%	-12%	-16%	-18%	-9%	-17%	-8%	-8%	-6%	-5%	-3%	-5%	-4%	-5%	-3%

QUESTIONS



Last updated 6/6/2022