Traffic Impact Studies
When and How

Tuesday, March 6, 2012
Traffic Impact Studies

• Players and perspectives
• A successful scoping meeting
• Latest resources and tools for analysis
• Ethics issues in reporting the results
• Ways to fund the recommended improvements
• Questions
Players and Perspectives

• **Developer** – land owner, broker, builder
• **Agency** – elected officials, boards and commissions, staff engineer
• **Study preparer** – engineer, could work for either side, often a consultant

• What is your role?
Players and Perspectives

The Tree, as seen by...

- the planner...
- the parks department...
- the publisher...
- the highways department...
- the developer...
- the landscape architect.
Players and Perspectives

Influences

- Elected officials, public opinion
- Health, safety, and welfare of the public
- Study Preparer
- Agency
- Developer
- $
Players and Perspectives

Considerations

Caught in the middle?

Agency

Economic development vs. traffic jams

Study Preparer

Time
(Time = $)

Developer
Players and Perspectives

Success

Still alive

Asset

$
How to Stay Alive

Conduct a successful scoping meeting
1. Have a scoping meeting
2. Limit participation
3. Discuss access points
4. Note agency’s biggest concern
5. Bring/use checklist
   – INDOT Applicant’s Guide Appendix A
6. Distribute meeting minutes
Resources

• Trip Generation
  – ITE Manual
  – ITE Journal articles
  – Corporate data
  – Conduct a study
Resources

• Traffic Data
  – Use existing data
  – Collect new data, various technologies
  – Ensure data validity
Resources

- Capacity Analysis (and Simulation)
  - Synchro/SimTraffic
  - Highway Capacity Software
  - Rodel, Sidra
  - VISSIM, Paramics
  - Others?
Reporting Results

• Explain assumptions
• Cite resources
• Display results in tables, figures
• Review meeting checklist
Reporting Results

• How to handle results that are not favorable to your client
• Potential ethics issues?

ITE Journal October 2011 ethics forum
Reporting Results

ITE Conclusions

• It is unethical for the consultant engineer to omit adverse impacts (driveways).

• It is unethical for the consultant engineer to not follow standards (MUTCD).

• It is unethical for either engineer to recommend access that fails to meet health, safety, and welfare of the public.

• City/consultant engineers work together.
How to prevent this situation: City Engineer

• Have policies and procedures in effect:
  – Access policy, study requirements, LOS standards, etc.
• Seek officials’ input and adoption
• Refer to and enforce these policies
Reporting Results

How to prevent situation: Consultant Engr.

• Explain agency’s policies to developer
• Manage client’s expectations
• Agree upon access possibilities at scoping meeting
• Don’t submit the study
• Don’t take the job
Funding Improvements

- Impact fees
- “Voluntary” contributions
- Percent impact
- Other methods?
Questions?

Jill Palmer, PE
jpalmer@schneidercorp.com  317-826-7129