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
- Developer
- $
Players and Perspectives

Considerations

Caught in the middle?

Economic development vs. traffic jams

Agency

Study Preparer

Time
(Time = $)

Developer
Players and Perspectives

Success

Study Preparer

Still alive

Asset

Agency

$Developer

Still alive
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.
Reporting Results

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?

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