
About This Manual

Design Manual

Chapter 1

General Information

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The *Design Manual* is published by the Methods Section in the Office of Design. This manual is in dual units. Generally, English units are followed by metric units in parentheses. Some tables and graphics require information to be presented separately in English and metric units. Some graphics and most example problems are presented in English versions only.

Most sections of the *Design Manual* are intended to give guidance or information on how a certain aspect of design is normally handled. To a lesser extent, the manual is also used to document normal design policy.

The intent of the Design Manual is to provide guidance to the designer by referencing a recommended range of values for critical dimensions. It is not intended to be a detailed instruction manual that could supercede the need for the application of sound principles by the knowledgeable design professional. Sufficient flexibility is permitted to encourage independent designs tailored to particular situations. Minimum values are either given or implied by the lower value in a given range of values. The larger values within the ranges will normally be used where the social, economic, and environmental (S.E.E.) impacts are not critical.

Effective Dates

There will be no specific effective date indicated for material published in this manual. Instead of this, the date the section was originally issued will be indicated (see above) and if the page is revised, it will be indicated below the original issue date (see above).

If a project is started after material is published in the *Design Manual*, it should consider the policies or guidelines in the manual. However, projects already under development when new material is published will have to be looked at on a case-by-case basis. If practical, the new guidance may be followed, but it will depend on how much of the design has already been completed and other considerations.

In some cases there will be a fixed date when a new design must be implemented (for example, there may be a specific deadline set by the FHWA for using improved safety appurtenances like guardrail terminals). The Methods Section will notify designers of any such deadlines but they will not be indicated in the *Design Manual*.