

Questions and Clarification for [Growth Rates](#)

1. Do these growth rates replace the calculated AADT growth rates that were based upon the AADT of the specific study roads?

Yes, these growth rates are to be used to calculate the background for existing traffic on the facility. The growth rates are to be used for all Traffic Impact Analyses effective October 1, 2026.

2. Do these rates include the approved developments as part of the growth rate?

No, this does not change the methodology for determining no build traffic volumes. Continue to add the approved development traffic on top of the background traffic growth.

3. Can a developer request to use a higher growth rate?

Yes, a developer can request to use a higher growth rate, but the value must be approved by the District Engineer for NCDOT studies. The law requires NCDOT to establish these growth rates to be used for studies completed for NCDOT. However, the law does not require municipalities or other entities to use these growth rates. If the municipality or other entity requires the use of a higher growth rate, then it is reasonable to request that the Department accept the higher rate to reduce the cost to complete the study.

4. Can a developer request to use a lower growth rate?

*As mentioned before, there may be municipalities that have required growth rates. If the growth rate required by the municipality is lower than what is published in this chart, then it would be appropriate to request the municipality to allow the use of the NCDOT growth rate. Any deviation to lower the growth rate on this chart for NCDOT studies is highly dependent on the County. These requests should be coordinated with the Congestion Management Unit for guidance and must be approved by the District Engineer. There may be some allowances to lower where the default rate is equal to the Statewide Rate, **there is no legislative allowance to lower the rate if the published rate is above the Statewide Rate.***

5. Why was a statewide rate used for counties with low and negative growth rates?

In counties where the calculated growth rates are very low or negative, a county wide growth rate used exacerbates the issue that growth throughout a county or traffic growth is not equal to population growth. By setting the rate to the statewide average it diminishes the risks for public to have a higher growth rate roadway in a county where the overall population is shrinking or growing at a very low rate. This also helps adjust for some of the seasonal variations that may be experienced.

An example would be Halifax County, where the calculated growth rate was negative (-0.88%). However, applying a negative growth rate to a development along US 158 approaching I-95 would not be reasonable. The traffic volumes along this facility have fluctuated significantly over the years and using a negative growth rate on a down year could lead to a less desirable decision for the Department and the public using this roadway. The law allows a higher value to be set, and we believe this is a good balance. The Statewide Rate represents a reasonable rule of thumb growth rate for a stable area.

6. How should growth be handled for Developments in areas with active STIP work?

The current methodology has not changed. TIAs that include additional or supplemental analysis related to the design year of STIP projects should use volumes obtained from the most recent TIP forecast. The growth rate is used for developing volumes in the primary analysis of a development.