

251 DESIGN EXCEPTIONS

The scoping team for a proposed Federally-funded project is required to identify and request design exceptions whenever a project is anticipated to not bring an existing roadway feature(s) up to current AASHTO design criteria as part of the proposed project. These roadway features are identified as the project scope is defined.

An analysis of recent crash history may reveal that a roadway design feature is not linked to or does not contribute to reported crashes, and should be documented in the design exception report for the project.

Conversely, a discernible pattern of reported crashes clearly linked to a roadway feature that does not meet current design criteria should also be documented in the design exception report for the project. If there is a discernible crash pattern clearly related to a roadway feature, a recommendation should be made for an improvement to be included in the project scope. This improvement may be an interim improvement that can be accommodated within the project scope and budget.

Report format examples are available from the Traffic Engineering Group. Reports should include:

- project limits
- reiteration of design exceptions requested
- crash period studied
- summary of all crashes
- explanation of each fatal crash.

And either:

- statement that roadway features did not contribute to the crashes, or
- recommendation for improvements based on crash history to be included in the project scope.

The State Traffic Engineer shall approve all recommendations for improvements resulting from design exception evaluations.