



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Driving Indiana's Economic Growth

Design Memorandum No. 23-12

September 14, 2023

TO: All Design, Operations, and District Personnel, and Consultants

FROM: /s/ Luis A. Laracuate
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SUBJECT: Design Exceptions

REVISES: *Indiana Design Manual* Sections 14-2.01(03), 40-6.01(08), 40-8.02, and 40-8.03

EFFECTIVE: Immediately

Project types listed below no longer require a Level One design exception other than for ADA compliance. An existing feature which does not satisfy INDOT design criteria may remain. However, a new design feature which does not satisfy INDOT criteria created by the project, or existing ones made worse, must be addressed in an exception, because such action in effect changes the project as built.

1. Non-freeway, standalone small structure replacement project,
2. Non-freeway, slide correction project, or
3. Safety improvement project. Design exceptions were previously required for safety improvement projects on a freeway or on the National Highway System.

Standalone small structure replacement projects and slide correction projects do not change or provide an opportunity to change the basic highway cross-section or geometry due to the scope of work. Safety improvement projects use safety funds and are developed to make improvements that address a specific safety problem.

A Level One checklist is not required for the permanent features but should be completed for maintenance of traffic, as required. Design decisions should be documented regardless of the requirement to submit a Level One checklist. Design Exceptions that have been submitted and are no longer required will be returned, indicating the change in practice.

The referenced sections in [IDM Chapter 14](#) have been revised to reflect this change in practice. The referenced sections in [IDM Chapter 40](#) have been revised to reflect this change in practice and to incorporate changes in Level One controlling criteria described in Design Memo 20-13. Existing railroad vertical clearance documentation guidance has been moved from Chapter 40 to General Plan sheet information in IDM sections 14-2.04(02) and 14-2.05(03).

For questions related to this design memo, please contact the Highway Engineering Division at roadreviewteam@indot.in.gov.