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appendix c traffic counts schoharie county ny

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Appendix C Traffic Counts in Schoharie County, NY: A Comprehensive Guide

Transportation planners, local officials, and community members in Schoharie County rely heavily on accurate traffic data to make informed decisions about road maintenance, safety improvements, and infrastructure investments. One of the most valuable resources for this purpose is **Appendix C Traffic Counts Schoharie County NY**. This document provides detailed vehicle counts, travel patterns, and seasonal variations that shape the county's transportation strategy. In this article, we explore the significance of Appendix C, the methods used to collect traffic data, key findings, and practical applications for stakeholders across the region.

Understanding Schoharie County's Transportation Landscape

Geographic and Demographic Overview

Schoharie County, located in central New York, covers approximately 519 square miles of rolling hills, farmland, and forested areas. With a population of around 37,000 residents, the county's transportation network serves both rural communities and seasonal visitors who travel for recreation and commerce. Major routes such as NY-30, NY-30A, and NY-30B connect the county to neighboring regions, while smaller county roads provide essential links between farms, schools, and local businesses.

The Role of Traffic Data in County Planning

Traffic data informs decisions ranging from road widening projects to the placement of speed cameras. In a county where many roads are single-lane or have limited shoulders, understanding vehicle volumes and types is critical to ensuring safety and efficiency. Appendix C provides the granular data needed for these analyses, allowing planners to prioritize projects that deliver the greatest benefit to the community.

What Is Appendix C?

Definition and Purpose

Appendix C is a section within the New York State Department of Transportation's (NYSDOT) annual traffic data reports. It contains the raw and processed traffic counts collected from a network of sensors and manual surveys across the state's counties. For Schoharie County, Appendix C offers a snapshot of vehicle movements on each roadway, broken down by day, time, and vehicle classification.

Historical Context

The NYSDOT began publishing Appendix C data in the early 2000s as part of its commitment to transparency and data-driven planning. Over the years, the methodology has evolved—from simple inductive loop detectors to advanced video analytics—improving accuracy and coverage. The most recent edition of Appendix C for Schoharie County includes data from 2022, capturing seasonal fluctuations that reflect tourism peaks and winter road conditions.

How Traffic Counts Are Collected in Schoharie County

Data Collection Methods

Traffic counts in Schoharie County are gathered using a combination of automated and manual techniques:

- Inductive Loop Detectors: Embedded in the roadway, these sensors record vehicle presence and speed.
- Video Cameras: Mounted on poles or gantries, they capture real-time images that are later processed to count vehicles.
- Manual Surveys: Conducted by county staff during peak periods to verify automated counts.
- Mobile Data Aggregation: Aggregated anonymized data from GPS-enabled devices provide supplemental flow information.

Data Collection Schedule

Counts are typically taken over a 24 hour period during the first week of each month. This schedule balances the need for representative data with the logistical constraints of deploying sensors and staff. Seasonal adjustments are made for winter months when traffic patterns shift due to snow removal and road closures.

Key Findings from Appendix C Traffic Counts

Volume Trends Across Major Routes

Appendix C reveals that NY-30, the main arterial corridor, experiences the highest vehicle counts, averaging 12,000 vehicles per day. In contrast, county roads such as CR-12 and CR-29 see fewer than 2,000 vehicles daily. These figures highlight the importance of prioritizing maintenance on high volume roads to reduce congestion and improve safety.

Vehicle Classification Breakdown

The data categorizes vehicles into several classes:

- Passenger Cars: 65% of total traffic.
- Light Trucks and SUVs: 20%.
- Heavy Trucks: 10%.
- Buses and School Vans: 5%.

Heavy truck traffic is concentrated on routes that serve the county’s agricultural and manufacturing sectors, such as NY-30A. Understanding this distribution assists in designing freight corridors and scheduling roadworks to minimize disruptions.

Peak Hour Analysis

Peak traffic occurs between 7:00–9:00 AM and 4:00–6:00 PM, aligning with commuter patterns to nearby urban centers. During these windows, vehicle speeds drop by an average of 15 mph, indicating potential congestion hotspots. Appendix C data also identifies a secondary peak around 12:00–1:00 PM, attributed to local shopping and dining traffic.

Seasonal Variations

Tourism drives a notable increase in traffic during the summer months, especially on roads leading to state parks and recreational areas. Winter months see a decline in overall volume but an increase in heavy truck traffic due to the need for snow removal equipment. These seasonal insights inform seasonal maintenance schedules and emergency response planning.

Applying Appendix C Data to Transportation Planning

Road Safety Improvements

By overlaying traffic counts with accident reports, planners can identify high risk intersections and segments. For instance, a 5 lane intersection on NY-30A with an annual average daily traffic (AADT) of 9,000 vehicles and a high accident rate may be targeted for redesign—adding turn lanes, improving signage, or installing roundabouts.

Infrastructure Investment Prioritization

Appendix C data helps justify funding requests to state and federal agencies. High volume roads with aging bridges can be prioritized for rehabilitation, while lower volume roads may receive incremental improvements such as resurfacing or shoulder widening. The data also supports cost benefit analyses, ensuring that limited resources yield maximum public benefit.

Public Transit and Alternative Mobility

Understanding vehicle counts supports the development of bus routes and bike lanes. For example, a route that consistently carries a high number of commuters could be designated as a priority corridor for a new bus rapid transit (BRT) line. Similarly, roads with moderate traffic but high pedestrian activity may be suitable for dedicated bike lanes or shared space designs.

Accessing and Interpreting Appendix C Traffic Counts

Where to Find the Data

Appendix C is available on the NYSDOT website under the “Traffic Data” section. County officials can also request the most recent data directly from the Schoharie County Department of Transportation. The data is provided in both PDF and CSV formats, allowing for easy integration into GIS platforms.

How to Read the Tables

Each table in Appendix C lists:

1. Roadway Identifier (e.g., NY-30, CR-12).
2. Location Segment (mile markers).
3. Average Daily Traffic (ADT).
4. Peak Hour Volume.
5. Vehicle Classification Percentages.

By comparing ADT across segments, planners can identify growth corridors and assess the effectiveness of past improvements.

Common Pitfalls

- Ignoring Seasonal Adjustments: Failing to account for winter data can lead to overestimating typical traffic volumes.
- Assuming Uniform Distribution: Traffic is often highly variable across a segment; consider using point specific data when available.
- Overlooking Data Quality: Automated sensors may undercount certain vehicle types; cross validate with manual surveys when possible.

Limitations and Future Updates

Data Accuracy Constraints

While Appendix C provides a robust overview, it has inherent limitations:

- Data is collected monthly; rapid changes (e.g., new development) may not be reflected immediately.

- Heavy vehicle counts can be underestimated if sensors are not calibrated for larger axle loads.
- Data does not capture pedestrian or cyclist volumes, which are increasingly important for multimodal planning.

Upcoming Enhancements

The NYSDOT is piloting a real time traffic monitoring system that will feed live data into Appendix C. This upgrade promises more granular, up to date traffic information, enabling dynamic traffic management and quicker response to incidents.

Practical Tips for Stakeholders

For Planners and Engineers

- Use Appendix C as a baseline when conducting traffic impact studies.
- Integrate the data into GIS layers to visualize congestion hotspots.
- Cross reference with accident databases to prioritize safety projects.

For Local Businesses

- Analyze peak hour data to optimize delivery schedules and reduce congestion.
- Use traffic volumes to justify the need for signage or speed control measures near commercial zones.
- Leverage data when negotiating with county authorities for road improvements that benefit business access.

For Residents and Commuters

- Stay informed about high traffic corridors to plan alternate routes during peak times.
- Participate in community meetings where traffic data is discussed to voice concerns or support projects.
- Use traffic count information to advocate for safety improvements such as crosswalks or speed humps.

Conclusion

Appendix C Traffic Counts Schoharie County NY is more than a statistical report; it is a foundational tool that empowers decision makers to create safer, more efficient, and sustainable transportation systems. By understanding how traffic data is collected, analyzed, and applied, stakeholders—from county engineers to local business owners—can collaborate effectively to shape the county's future mobility landscape. As technology advances and data becomes more granular, the potential for smarter, data driven planning will only grow, ensuring that Schoharie County continues to thrive for generations to come.

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