

Southwest Michigan Traffic Counting

Understanding the Data

1. Data Collection

Traffic count data is collected with two tubes and a counter. You probably have driven over these rubber tubes at one time or seen the unusual box on the side the road and wondered what that is. The tubes lay across the road 2 feet apart and are connected to a counter at the side the road. As a vehicle travels over the tubes, a pulse of air travels to the counter. The counters not only count the number of vehicles, but measure the gap, the speed and the class. In most cases the count data is collected and processed for the customer.

2. Traffic Counting PDF Reports

The traffic counting PDF report contains the start date, end date, location, table and graph of your requested data.

- a. The start date, end date and location of the count are located in the upper right corner of the report. The start date represents the date the count was set up and the end date represents the date the count was picked up. The location identifies the road the count is on and a description of where the count is located on that road.
 - b. The table consists of rows and columns. The rows are split up into 60 minute intervals beginning with the start date and time and ending with the pick up date and time. The columns consist of lane directions and a total column. For each 60 minute interval and lane direction a total number of vehicles that traveled over the tubes are documented. The total column adds the total number of vehicles counted in both directions. At the end of table a grand total of number of vehicles that traveled across the tubes is given, along with the percentages. The Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) and the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) is also given.
 - c. The Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) is the average 24-hour traffic volume at a location over a full year. In theory, you would arrive at this number by counting traffic at a location for 365 days, adding it all up, then dividing by 365. However, it's usually not practical to count a location for a full year. This value can be calculated from as little as one interval of data. Of course, to be accurate the sample size should be a little bigger. We recommend at least 72 hours.
 - d. Average Daily Traffic (ADT) is similar to AADT, but for a period less than one year. An ADT is valid only for the period of time it is measured, whether that's a month, a week or a day.
 - e. The bar graph on the right side of the report represents the intensity of the flow of the traffic. The highest bar represents the 60 minute intervals with the top end of traffic flow.
- #### 3. Accessing Traffic Count Data Online
- a. Traffic counting data can be accessed online at http://www.swmpc.org/traffic_counts.asp.
 - b. The website offers the public count data all over Southwest Michigan. Choose from a Map view or a List view.

Page 1 of Traffic Count Report



Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

185 East Main Street, Suite 701
 Benton Harbor MI, 49022
 269 925-1137

Date traffic count taken

Page 1

Site Code: B21072100Row 1
 Date Start: 21-Jul-09
 Date End: 23-Jul-09
 Brownstown Rd
 East of Cleveland Ave
 Date Printed: 11-Jan-10

Location of traffic count

Start Time	21-Jul-09 Tue	Westbound	Eastbound	Combined Total
12:00 AM		*	*	*
01:00		*	*	*
02:00		*	*	*
03:00		*	*	*
04:00		*	*	*
05:00		*	*	*
06:00		*	*	*
07:00		*	*	*
08:00		*	*	*
09:00		*	*	*
10:00		*	*	*
11:00		*	*	*
12:00 PM		*	*	*
01:00		*	*	*
02:00		8	8	16
03:00		9	14	23
04:00		10	6	16
05:00		11	13	24
06:00		11	10	21
07:00		12	8	20
08:00		3	11	14
09:00		6	5	11
10:00		3	2	5
11:00		2	1	3
Total		75	78	153
Percent		49.0%	51.0%	

Total number of cars during the traffic count timeframe



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 185 East Main Street, Suite 701
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Page 3
 Site Code: B21072109Brow 1
 Date Start: 21-Jul-09
 Date End: 23-Jul-09
 Browntown Rd.
 East of Cleveland Ave.
 Date Printed: 11-Jan-10

Start Time	23-Jul-09 Thu	Westbound	Eastbound	Combined Total	
12:00 AM		0	1	1	█
01:00		0	0	0	
02:00		1	0	1	█
03:00		0	0	0	
04:00		0	2	2	█
05:00		1	0	1	█
06:00		3	0	3	█
07:00		10	4	14	██████████
08:00		4	7	11	██████████
09:00		8	5	13	██████████
10:00		5	4	9	██████████
11:00		5	8	13	██████████
12:00 PM		6	15	21	██████████████████
01:00		4	0	4	██
02:00		*	*	*	
03:00		*	*	*	
04:00		*	*	*	
05:00		*	*	*	
06:00		*	*	*	
07:00		*	*	*	
08:00		*	*	*	
09:00		*	*	*	
10:00		*	*	*	
11:00		*	*	*	
Total		47	46	93	
Percent		50.5%	49.5%		
Grand Total		292	277		
Percentage		51.3%	48.7%		

ADT

ADT 323

AADT 323

Average Daily Traffic
(in number of vehicles)

Annual Average Daily
Traffic (in number of
vehicles) – same as ADT
when traffic is only counted
over span of one day