

Guidelines to Determine When to Request an Updated Traffic Forecast

Purpose

Since unnecessary traffic forecasts can adversely affect the project's cost, schedule, and budget, it is important to follow these guidelines to determine if an updated or new traffic forecast is required.

Guidelines

There are two primary paths to consider when it is believed that it is necessary to update the current traffic forecast. One is straight forward and results in the request of a new forecast. The other situation is flexible and will allow the Design Engineer to evaluate the aged traffic forecast data.

Situation 1 – New Alternative(s)

A new alternative is identified and it needs a forecast. The only option is to request a new traffic forecast. However, there are many items that need to be considered. Before requesting a new forecast, make the following determinations and do the following:

- Determine if the project is in a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) area. If the project is in an MPO, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is required to use the last adopted model for the traffic forecast. If the model has been revised since the original forecast, it may be necessary to request an update for all of the other alternatives. You should contact either the Transportation Planning Branch Coordinator for the area, or the State Traffic Forecast Engineer for information on the date of the latest adopted model.
- Determine if you want the forecast dates to be the same as the original forecast. This means the same Base Year and same Future Year (also known as Horizon Year or Out Year) will be provided if possible.
- Have Tri-Project Manager add the appropriate Traffic Forecast Activity to the Scheduling, Tracking and Reporting System (STaRS) and complete a request for a new forecast.

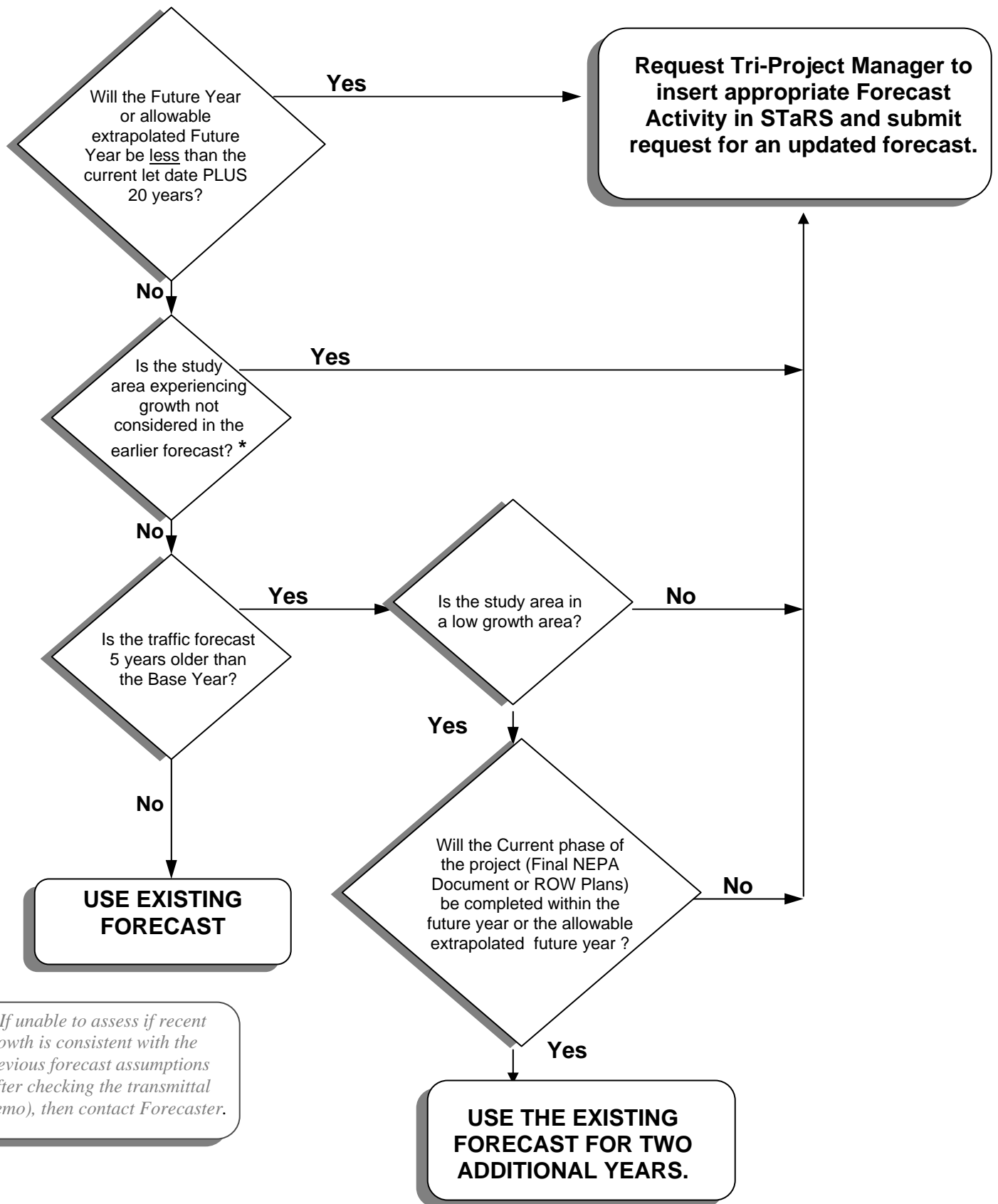
Situation 2 – Age of Forecast

A project forecast is five years old or older from the base year and is under study / design. Examples of “under study / design” include but are not limited to:

- a) The Project Development and Environmental Analysis (PDEA) Project Engineer will evaluate the need for Traffic Forecast when they begin a new project phase (Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)) or project re-initiation.
- b) The Roadway Design Engineer will evaluate the need for requesting an updated traffic forecast when they request final surveys for the project.

To determine if a new forecast is needed, use the *Traffic Forecast Flow Chart*.

Traffic Forecast Flow Chart (for Situation 2)



* If unable to assess if recent growth is consistent with the previous forecast assumptions (after checking the transmittal memo), then contact Forecaster.