

Levels of Service

Level of Service (LOS) is a tool that measures the quality of operations for different roadway types, features, and controls. The Level of Service is computed from variables including speed, geometry and traffic volume.

There are six level of service grades that represent all of the possible operating conditions; these levels range from LOS A, representing optimum operation, to LOS F, representing congested or unstable flow. Typically, in urbanized areas, a roadway component is seen as adequate if the corresponding level of service is D or better, while LOS results E and F indicate near failure and failure, respectively.

LOS		Definition
Acceptable	A	Represents a free-flow operation. Vehicles are almost completely unimpeded in their ability to maneuver within the traffic stream.
	B	Represents reasonably free-flow operation. The ability to maneuver within the traffic stream is slightly restricted.
	C	Represents a traffic flow with speeds near or at free-flow speed. Ability to maneuver within the traffic stream is noticeably restricted.
	D	Represents speeds that begin to decline with increased density. Ability to maneuver within the traffic stream is noticeably limited.
Unacceptable	E	Represents operation at its capacity. Vehicles are closely spaced within the traffic stream and there are virtually no useable gaps to maneuver.
	F	Represents a breakdown of vehicle flow. This condition exists within queues forming behind the breakdown points.