SNS COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

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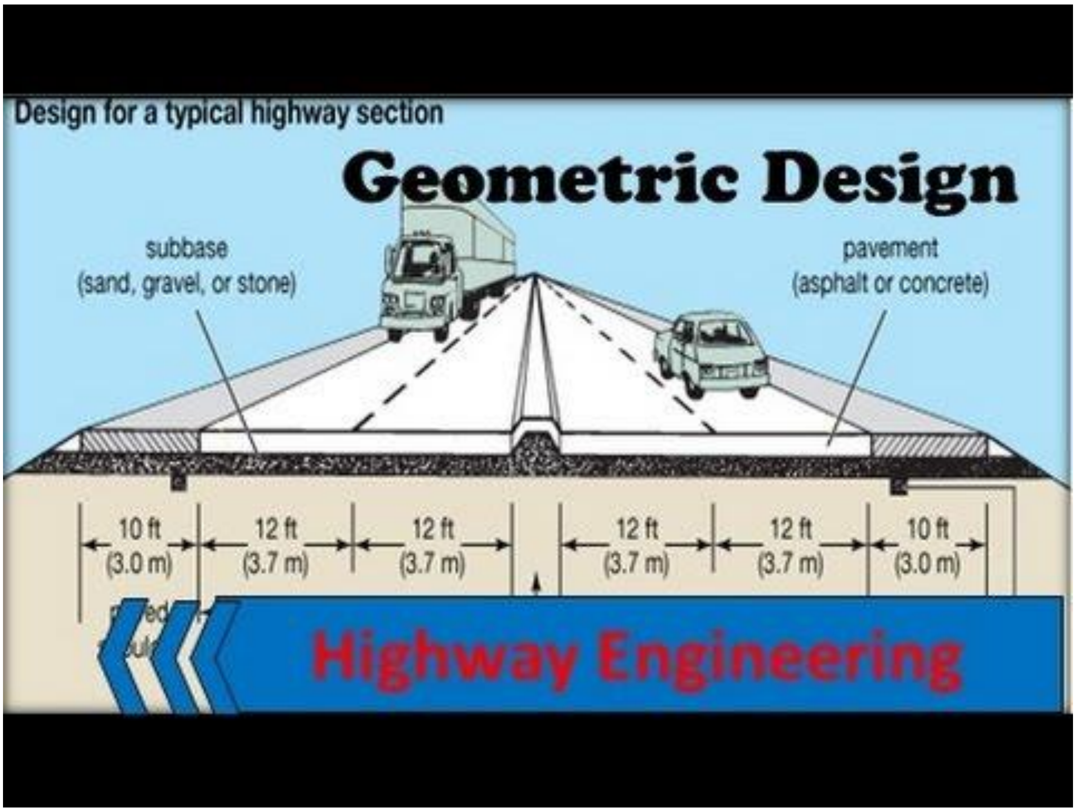
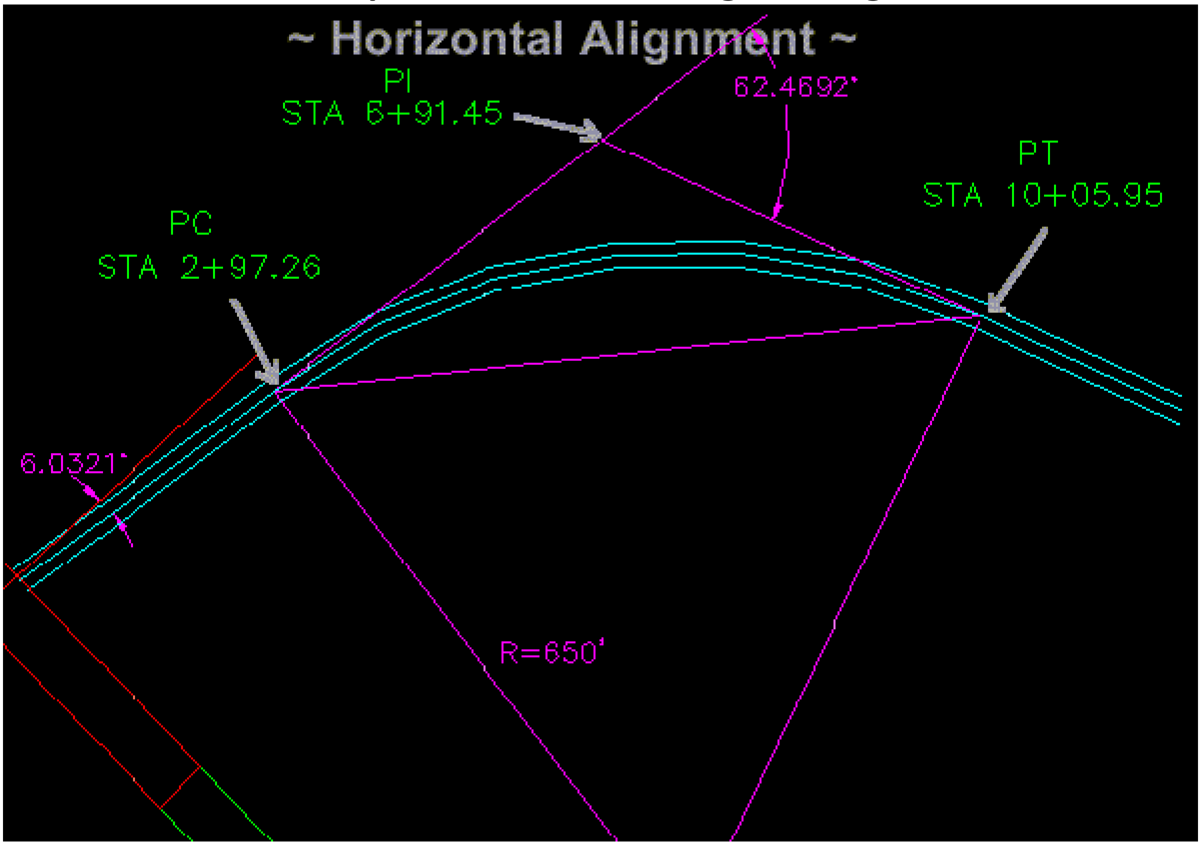
Department of Civil Engineering

UNIT- II

16CET205-
HIGHWAY
AND
RAILWAY
ENGINEERING



Design of horizontal alignment - Sight distance



Geometric Design Speed of Highways

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Design Speed

The design speed, as noted earlier, is the single most important f actor in the design of horizontal alignment. The design speed also depends on the type of the road. For e.g., the design speed expected from a National highway will be much higher than a village road, and hence the curve geometry will vary significantly.

The design speed also de pends on the type of terrain. A plain terrain can afford to have any geometry, but for the same standard in a hilly terrain requires substantial cutting and filling implying exorbitant costs as well as safety concern due to unstable slopes. Therefore, the design speed is normally reduced for terrains with steep slopes.

For instance, Indian Road Congress (IRC) has classified the terrain into four categories, namely plain, rolling, mountainous, and steep based on the cross slope as given in table. Based on the type of road and type of terrain the design speed varies. The IRC has suggested desirable or ruling speed as well as minimum suggested design speed and is tabulated in table.

Table : Terrain classification

Terrain classification	Cross slope (%)
Plain	0-10
Rolling	10-25
Mountainous	25-60
Steep	60

The recommended design speed is given in Table .

Table : Design speed in as per IRC (ruling and minimum)

Type	Plain	Rolling	Hilly	Steep
NS&SH	100-80	80-65	50-40	40-30
MDR	80-65	65-50	40-30	30-20
ODR	65-50	50-40	30-25	25-20
VR	50-40	40-35	25-20	25-20

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Terrain classification Cross slope (%)

Plain 0-10
Rolling 10-25
Mountainous 25-60
Steep 60

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Photo: Scott Bradley, Paula Gustafson, and Neil Kveber, Mn/DOT.

1 Topography:

The next important factor that affects the geometric design is the topography. It is easier to construct roads with required standards for a plain terrain. However, for a given design speed, the construction cost increases multiform with the gradient and the terrain. Therefore, geometric design standards are different for different terrain to keep the cost of construction and time of construction under control. This is characterized by sharper curves and steeper gradients.

2 Other factors:

In addition to design speed and topography, there are various other factors that affect the geometric design and they are briely discussed below:

Vehicle: The dimensions, weight of the axle and operating characteristics of a vehicle influence the design aspects such as width of the pavement, radii of the curve, clearances, parking geometrics etc. A design vehicle which has standard weight, dimensions and operating characteristics are used to establish highway design controls to accommodate vehicles of a designated type.

Human: The important human factors that influence geometric design are the physical, mental and psychological characteristics of the driver and pedestrians like the reaction time.

Traffic: It will be uneconomical to design the road for peak traffic flow. Therefore a reasonable value of traffic volume is selected as the design hourly volume which is determined from the various traffic data collected. The geometric design is thus based on this design volume, capacity etc.

Environmental: Factors like air pollution, noise pollution etc. should be given due consideration in the geometric design of roads.

Factors affecting Sight distance

The most important consideration in all these is that at all times the driver traveling at the design speed of the highway must have sufficient carriageway distance within his line of vision to allow him to stop his vehicle before colliding with a slowly moving or stationary object appearing suddenly in his own traffic lane.

The computation of sight distance depends on:

Reaction time of the driver

Reaction time of a driver is the time taken from the instant the object is visible to the driver to the instant when the brakes are applied. The total reaction time may be split up into four components based on PIEV theory. In practice, all these times are usually combined into a total perception-reaction time suitable for design purposes as well as for easy measurement. Many of the studies show that drivers require about 1.5 to 2 secs under normal conditions. However, taking into consideration the variability of driver characteristics, a higher value is normally used in design. For example, IRC suggests a reaction time of 2.5 secs.

Speed of the vehicle

The speed of the vehicle very much affects the sight distance. Higher the speed, more time will be required to stop the vehicle. Hence it is evident that, as the speed increases, sight distance also increases.

Efficiency of brakes

The efficiency of the brakes depends upon the age of the vehicle, vehicle characteristics etc. If the brake efficiency is 100%, the vehicle will stop the moment the brakes are applied. But practically, it is not possible to achieve 100% brake efficiency. Therefore the sight distance required will be more when the efficiency of brakes are less. Also for safe geometric design, we assume that the vehicles have only 50% brake efficiency.

Frictional resistance between the tyre and the road

The frictional resistance between the tyre and road plays an important role to bring the vehicle to stop. When the frictional resistance is more, the vehicles stop immediately. Thus sight required will be less. No separate provision for brake efficiency is provided while computing the sight distance. This is taken into account along with the factor of longitudinal friction. IRC has specified the value of longitudinal friction in between 0.35 to 0.4.

Gradient of the road.

Gradient of the road also affects the sight distance. While climbing up a gradient, the vehicle can stop immediately. Therefore sight distance required is less. While descending a gradient, gravity also comes into action and more time will be required to stop the vehicle. Sight distance required will be more in this case.

Economy: The design adopted should be economical as far as possible. It should match with the funds allotted for capital cost and maintenance cost.

Others: Geometric design should be such that the aesthetics of the region is not affected.