Decision Sight Distance

Decision sight distance is the distance required for a driver to detect an unexpected or otherwise difficult-to-perceive information source, recognize the source, select an appropriate speed and path, and initiate and complete the required maneuver safely and efficiently. Because decision sight distance gives drivers additional margin for error and affords them sufficient length to maneuver their vehicles at the same or reduced speed rather than to just stop, its values are substantially greater than stopping sight distance. Table 2-2 shows recommended decision sight distance values for various avoidance maneuvers.

Table 2-2: Recommended Decision Sight Distance Values

Decision sight distance (ft) Avoidance maneuver					
Design speed (mph)	A	B	C	D	E
30	220	490	450	535	620
35	275	590	525	625	720
40	330	690	600	715	825
45	395	800	675	800	930
50	465	910	750	890	1030
55	535	1030	865	980	1135
60	610	1150	990	1125	1280
65	695	1275	1050	1220	1365
70	780	1410	1105	1275	1445
75	875	1545	1180	1365	1545
80	970	1685	1260	1455	1650

Avoidance Maneuver A: Stop on rural road – t = 3.0s
Avoidance Maneuver B: Stop on urban road – t = 9.1s
Avoidance Maneuver C: Speed/path/direction change on rural road – t varies between 10.2 and 11.2s
Avoidance Maneuver D: Speed/path/direction change on suburban road – t varies between 12.1 and 12.9s
Avoidance Maneuver E: Speed/path/direction change on urban road – t varies between 14.0 and 14.5s