NCDOT Multimodal Planning Guidelines

Content Standards for Municipal or County-Level Multimodal Network Plan

Version 2/2/2022

A comprehensive multimodal network plan supports implementation of bicycle, pedestrian and transit improvements and fosters a more walkable, bikeable and transit-friendly environment and an overall higher quality of life for the community residents and visitors. Multimodal network plans are part of the first step in the project development process in North Carolina which starts with long range planning (including Comprehensive Transportation Plans, Metropolitan Transportation Plans and municipal or county multimodal network plans), development of further detail through a feasibility study when required, and continues through project prioritization for funding in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) before the project can advance into design, environmental documentation and construction.

As part of the NCDOT Complete Streets Policy all multimodal projects may be considered for funding as part of a roadway improvement project regardless of adjacent roadway improvements if the project is identified in existing local and regional plans.

The following document outlines the expected content for the development of comprehensive municipal or county-level multimodal plans, also known as network plans. The name network plan is meant to differentiate from corridor plans or small area plans developed for a smaller sub-area. This document is intended for consultants preparing a plan with funds received through the NCDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Multimodal Planning Grant Initiative. While most of the following content is expected for inclusion in some form, it is preferred that the final plan document be concise, with appropriate text/information provided in charts/figures where possible. Additional information may be provided as an appendix as appropriate.

Content

Title Page

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents & Index of Maps, Tables, Figures and/or Charts

Overview

Introduction

Vision and Goals

History/Project Background

Benefits/ Why This Plan is Important - Describe benefits specific to the community including mobility, safety, health, economic, environmental, etc.

Current Conditions

- Provide an overview of the community (demographics, physical characteristics, transportation network, etc.), community concerns/needs/priorities, and analysis of local bicycle and/or pedestrian crash data.
- Assess current conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians within the local transportation system, including existing on and off-street bicycle/pedestrian networks and facilities, as well as the overall transportation network. Identify any issues with current connectivity, problematic street crossings/intersections, maintenance issues, safety hazards and deficiencies such as gaps/hazards/natural or man-made barriers/substandard design/etc.
- Describe current walking and/or bicycling rates (generally describe when specific data is not available).
- Describe frequency (daily bus trips) of service on routes and availability of weekday and weekend fixed-route transit within a 10-minute walk.
- Provide map of existing bicycle and/or pedestrian facilities, and any other relevant maps.
- Provide an inventory table describing road and lane width, presence of curb/gutter or shoulder, AADT, speed limit, etc. for selected roadways/corridors.
- Identify key generators/attractors, origins and/or destination points and existing transit stops and create a map reflecting those.
- Identify any special population/user groups and equity concerns.
- Review the interaction with the local and regional transit systems (if applicable/if any transit present) and gather new data or update where necessary.
    - Review prior transit plans relevant to the study area for any noted bicycle and pedestrian access concerns
    - Existing bus routes

    - Existing transit stops in the study area
    - Gather information on ridership by stop, if available, or by route, to highlight transit stop locations with highest use
- Identify and map up to three priority corridors for access to transit analysis based on pedestrian crashes, transit ridership volume, other relevant local factors (if applicable as part of a Network plan).
    - Prioritize transit corridors by analyzing a variety of factors (e.g., historic crash data, existing infrastructure, transit ridership by stop, frequency of existing crossings, local input and steering committee guidance, etc.).
- Document land use, demographics, and safety concerns.
    - Corridor name
    - Larger activity centers
    - Bicycle and pedestrian crash densities
- Map walk access network (walkshed) and bicycle access network (i.e. existing linear facilities, existing crossing locations and network gaps) in proximity to bus stops on priority corridors (1/4-mile walking radius and 1-mile bicycling access radius around transit stops).
    - Provide a map of existing bicycle and/or pedestrian facilities in relation to existing transit routes, and any other relevant maps.
- Identify issues with existing connectivity, problematic street crossings/intersections, maintenance concerns, safety hazards and deficiencies such as gaps/hazards/natural or man-made barriers/substandard design/etc.
- Identify and review relevant local, regional and state plans.
- Identify and review any relevant policies and institutional framework, including any bicycle or pedestrian statutes and ordinances.
- Describe existing local encouragement, educational or enforcement programs and initiatives.
- Provide a summary of public input from the steering committee, public comment/outreach efforts and focus groups.

Public and Stakeholder Engagement

- With assistance from local staff, form and assemble a Steering Committee for the study.
- Three to four (3-4) meetings of the Steering Committee to be held during the study process to help develop the vision, goals, and objectives, review key community activity centers and destinations, review draft project selection methodology, and provide feedback regarding the planned public engagement plan.
- Hold stakeholder interviews with representatives of 3-10 key local government departments, state agencies and non-profits that support and participate in implementation of multimodal transportation projects to better understand existing policies and processes and how those impact multimodal improvements implementation over time.
- Prepare a Public Engagement Plan including the Equity Engagement Plan elements to reach the traditionally underserved community groups through engaging with local community leaders, small focus groups and other initiatives.
    - The Public Engagement Plan will explain the overall strategy for targeting outreach efforts to and engaging priority communities. The plan must be approved by IMD staff.

    - Because traditional public engagement efforts (surveys, public meetings, etc.) are not necessarily the best way to reach traditionally underserved community groups, IMD supports more targeted efforts, such as community organized/led focus groups, the use of incentive stipends for community organizers to hold small meetings, and 'meetings-in-a-box'.
- Hold two public engagement meetings in virtual or in-person format to review existing conditions findings and draft recommendations.
- Conduct two surveys to solicit feedback from the public regarding community priorities and draft recommendations.
- Summarize public and stakeholder engagement results as part of final report.

Recommended Multimodal System Plan

- Identify and map the priority corridors/special focus areas with highest potential and demand for bicycle and/or pedestrian travel based on input from the public and steering committee.
- Discuss short-term and long-term opportunities and constraints with the development of facilities through new construction, upgrades/retrofits, regularly scheduled road maintenance, etc.
    - Highlight bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects that would contribute to improved access to existing transit stops, if applicable
- Develop a methodology for prioritizing projects (recommended alignment with NCDOT's STI Strategic Prioritization, where appropriate).
    - Equity must be included as a factor in the project prioritization methodology.
- Identify and list proposed projects (linear and crossing/intersection projects) including the existing roadway conditions, preferred treatment(s) and method of facility development, proposed cross-section, project development constraints, and cost estimates.
- This shall include four to six priority project cut sheets that focus on projects that ideally have a greater opportunity for implementation in the short-term (through NCDOT's STI Strategic Prioritization or other funding/programming source). Visual renderings shall also be provided.
- Provide map(s) of recommended network.
- Develop conceptual plans for the recommended access to transit improvements.
    - Typical Cross Section Renderings
    - Perspectives/Photoshop renderings
    - Overall Master Plan View Graphics

Recommended Programs and Policies

- Provided recommendations for encouragement, education and enforcement programs based on size and characteristics of the local community and input from the public/steering committee.
- Review local policies (UDO, land development regulations, etc.), departmental procedures, design guidelines and recommend changes where necessary.

Implementation Plan

- Provide an overview of implementation recommendations and describe the organizational framework needed.

- Specifically outline administrative, policy, program, infrastructure, and other implementation action steps with a timeframe identified.
- Highlight short term "low hanging fruit" policy and program activities and project implementation next steps that could take place over the next 1-3 years
- Identify lead agencies and key partners and describe the roles of stakeholder agencies and organizations.
- Discuss funding sources/opportunities.
- Provide performance measures that can be used as evaluation and monitoring metrics.
- Provide a summary of design guideline resources/links including how to use them, where to find them, etc.

Final Deliverables

- Recommended project inventory organized by category, with cost estimates.
- Prioritized list and maps of short-term and long-term multi-modal improvements.
- Four to six (4-6) priority project visualizations for implementation.
- Final multimodal network plan map for use as a transportation overlay and element of local and regional transportation plans.
- ArcGIS files (NCDOT's standard geodatabase template for bicycle and pedestrian facilities).
- Additionally, the ArcGIS data of the proposed network will also be formatted separately to correspond with NCDOT Comprehensive Transportation Plans (CTP) mapping practices and provided to NCDOT.
- One (1) full color, bound copy of the plan (for the Town).
- One (1) print-ready original of the plan.
- One (1) digital copy of the MS Word or InDesign document(s) and Adobe Acrobat files of document(s).
    - Digital copies of all documents, maps, text, GIS layers, and images on a flash drive, including one digital copy for NCDOT.
    - All rights released to the Town/County and NCDOT free of any passwords or other barriers.