

NCDOT Multimodal Planning Guidelines

Content Standards for Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Network Plan and Plan Update

Version 2/2/2022

A bicycle/pedestrian plan supports implementation of bicycle and pedestrian improvements and fosters a more walkable and bikeable environment and an overall higher quality of life for the community residents and visitors. Bicycle and pedestrian network plans are part of 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 update adopted in August 2019, multimodal improvements identified in local and regional multimodal plans and long-range plans can be included as part of roadway improvement projects design and construction when they overlap with roadway projects funded in the State Transportation Improvement Program.

The following document outlines the expected content for the development of comprehensive municipal or county-level bicycle and pedestrian network 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 subarea. This document is intended for consultants preparing a plan with funds received through the NCDOT Multimodal Planning Grant Initiative. While most of the following content is expected for inclusion in some form, it is preferred that the plan is developed in a more condensed manner, with appropriate text/information provided in charts/figures where possible.

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.
- 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.
- Describe current walking and/or bicycling rates (generally describe when specific data is not available).
- 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.
- Identify relevant local, regional, and state plans.
- Identify any relevant policies and institutional framework, including any bicycle or pedestrian statutes and ordinances.
- Describe any local encouragement, educational or enforcement programs and initiatives.
- Characteristics

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 approaches.
- 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.
- Provide a summary of public input from the steering committee, public comment/outreach efforts and focus groups.
- Summarize public and stakeholder engagement results as part of final report.

Recommended Network 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 potential 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 five to ten priority project cutsheets 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 for the cutsheet priority projects.
 - Cut sheets shall also include: planning-level cost estimates, discussion of significant barriers to implementation (right of way, utility relocation, stakeholder and/or political considerations, etc.) and key features of proposed improvements.
- Provide map(s) of recommended network.

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 some prime 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 bike and pedestrian or multi-modal improvements.
- Four to six (4-6) priority project visualizations for implementation.
- Final bicycle/pedestrian 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.