



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

JAMES H. TROGDON, III
SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM

TO: NCDOT Employees

FROM: James H. Trogdon, III, PE
Secretary

DATE: August 30, 2019

SUBJECT: Complete Streets Policy Guidance

Attached is the Department's updated Complete Streets Policy, adopted by the Board of Transportation at the August meeting. This policy update is a result of nearly two years of careful analysis, engagement with our partners and collaboration across units to understand and address the challenges of delivering Complete Streets. Updating the Complete Streets Policy has been one of my priorities since returning to the Department, and I am committed to ensuring the Policy is implemented consistently across the state.

As we plan, design and construct the transportation network of the future, this policy update represents the Department's ongoing commitment to safe, multi-modal transportation. The attached Complete Streets Policy and Implementation Guide details my expectations for how Complete Streets will be planned, prioritized, designed, constructed and maintained across the state. My priority is to ensure that as a Department, we construct facilities that our communities want, need and will use.

Effective immediately, Highway Division projects that have not yet completed an Environmental Document will be expected to comply with the updated Policy. As we implement Complete Streets, we will refine our guidance and the Complete Streets Technical Team formed to aid in the development of the Policy update will continue to meet to oversee implementation.

cc: David Howard, Chief Deputy Secretary
Julie White, Deputy Secretary for Multi-Modal
Hanna Cockburn, AICP, Director of Integrated Mobility
Chris Werner, PE, Director of Technical Services, Division of Highways
Tim M. Little, PE, Chief Engineer
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COMPLETE STREETS

NCDOT POLICY (#)

A.09.0106

Business Category: Multi-Modal		Business Area: Bicycle & Pedestrian Division	
Approval Date: 8/8/2019	Last Revision Date: N/A	Next Review Date: 8/8/20	
Authority: Select all that apply: <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Requires Board approval <input type="checkbox"/> Requires Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) approval <input type="checkbox"/> Requires other external agency approval: Click here to enter external agency name(s) .		Policy Owner: Bicycle & Pedestrian Division, Division of Highways	
Definitions: <p>Complete Streets is North Carolina’s approach to interdependent, multi-modal transportation networks that safely accommodate access and travel for all users.</p>			
Policy: <p>Transportation, quality of life, and economic development are all undeniably connected through well-planned, well-designed, and context-sensitive transportation solutions. To NCDOT, the designations “well-planned”, “well-designed” and “context-sensitive” imply that transportation is an integral part of a comprehensive network that safely supports the needs of communities and the traveling public.</p> <p>The North Carolina Department of Transportation, in its role as steward over the transportation infrastructure, is committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing safety for all transportation modes, in support of Vision Zero, a statewide program which aims to eliminate roadway deaths and injuries using data-driven prevention strategies; • Providing an efficient multi-modal transportation network in North Carolina such that the access, mobility, and safety needs of motorists, transit users, bicyclists, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities are safely accommodated; • Caring for the built and natural environments by promoting sustainable development practices that minimize impacts on natural resources, historic resources, businesses, residents, scenic and other community values, while also recognizing that transportation improvements have significant potential to contribute to local, regional, and statewide quality of life and economic development objectives; • Working in partnership with local government agencies, interest groups, and the public to plan, fund, design, construct, and manage complete street networks that sustain mobility through walking, biking, transit and driving. <p>This policy requires NCDOT planners and designers consider and incorporate multimodal facilities in the design and improvement of all appropriate transportation projects in North Carolina. Routine maintenance projects may be excluded from this requirement if an appropriate source of funding is not available. Consideration of multimodal elements will begin at the inception of the transportation planning process and the decisions made will be documented.</p>			

The Department recognizes the types of roadway users and the way they interact with the transportation network is evolving as transportation technologies such as ride share, connected and autonomous vehicles, and electric vehicles become more prevalent. The Department will consider these evolving technologies and users in its planning and design guidelines.

This policy sets forth the protocol for the development of transportation networks that encourage non-vehicular travel without compromising the safety, efficiency, or function of the facility. The purpose of this policy is to guide existing decision making and design processes to ensure that all users are included during the planning, design, construction, funding, operation and maintenance of North Carolina's transportation network, and will not create barriers or hazards to the movements of those users.

Scope:

This policy generally applies to all projects undertaken by NCDOT throughout the state.

There are many factors that must be considered when implementing the policy, e.g., number of lanes, design speeds, intersection spacing, medians, curb parking, etc. The applicability of this policy should not be construed as conclusive. Each facility must be evaluated for proper applicability. Notwithstanding the exceptions stated herein, all transportation facilities funded by or through NCDOT, and planned, designed, or constructed on state-maintained facilities, must adhere to this policy.

Approach:

The Department is committed to collaborate with cities, towns, and communities to ensure pedestrian, bicycle, transit and evolving transportation technology options are included as an integral part of their total transportation vision. As a partner in the development and realization of their visions, the Department desires to assist localities, through the facilitation of long-range planning, to optimize connectivity, network interdependence, context sensitive options, and multimodal alternatives. During the Comprehensive Transportation Planning process, bicycle, pedestrian, transit, and other multimodal usage shall be presumed to exist along and across certain corridors (e.g. between residential developments, schools, businesses and recreational areas).

It is the policy of the Department of Transportation to fully replace existing Complete Streets facilities disturbed as a result of a highway improvement project.

Planning and Design Guidelines:

The Complete Streets Planning and Design Guidelines were developed in 2012 to provide planners, designers and decision-makers with a framework for evaluating and incorporating various design elements into the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of the Department's transportation projects. The guidelines describe the planning and project development procedures, including required documentation, to support the Complete Streets policy. In addition, the guidelines describe how all roadway users will share the right of way safely and provide special design elements and traffic management strategies to address unique circumstances.

Planning, implementation and design guidelines will be updated periodically to address changes in Departmental policies and procedures and to reflect new transportation technologies and innovations.

The NCDOT Roadway Design Manual is intended to serve as the authoritative reference for Complete Streets design in accordance with adopted guidelines of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials and other adopted or approved State and Federal guidelines and standards.

Exceptions to Policy:

It is the Department’s expectation that suitable multimodal facilities will be incorporated in all appropriate new and improved infrastructure projects. Exceptions to this policy will be considered where exceptional circumstances that prohibit adherence to this policy exist. Such exceptions include, but are not limited to:

- Facilities that prohibit specific users by law;
- Areas in which the population and employment densities or level of transit service around the facility does not justify the incorporation of a multimodal facilities;
- Emergency repairs that require immediate attention.

As exceptions to policy requests are unique in nature, each will be considered on a case-by- case basis. Each exception must be approved by the Complete Streets Review Team consisting of the following or their designees:

- Complete Streets Program Administrator,
- State Traffic Engineer,
- State Roadway Engineer,
- Integrated Mobility Division Director, and
- Division Planning Engineer/Corridor Development Engineer.

Routine maintenance projects may be excluded from this requirement if an appropriate source of funding is not available.

Policy Distribution:

It is the responsibility of all employees to comply with Departmental policies. Therefore, every business unit and appropriate private service provider will be required to maintain a complete set of these policies. The Department shall periodically update departmental guidance to ensure that accurate and up-to-date information is maintained and housed in a policy management system.

Related Documents:

This policy builds on current practices and encourages creativity for considering and providing multi-modal options within transportation projects, while achieving safety and efficiency. Specific procedural guidance includes:

- Highway Landscape Planting Policy (dated 6/10/1988)
- Pedestrian Policy Guidelines – Sidewalk Location (Memo from Larry Goode, 2/15/1995)
- Board of Transportation Resolution: Bicycling & Walking in North Carolina, A Critical Part of the Transportation System (adopted 9/8/2000)
- Bridge Policy (2000)
- Pedestrian Policy Guidelines (effective 10/1/2000, Memo from Len Hill, 9/28/2000)
- NCDOT Context Sensitive Solutions Goals and Working Guidelines (updated 9/8/2003)
- Aesthetics Guidance Manual (2015)

Revision History		
Revision Date	Revision Number	Description
8/8/19	0	Approved

RESOLUTION FOR THE BOARD OF TRANSPORTATION IN SUPPORT OF IMPLEMENTATION FOR THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION COMPLETE STREETS POLICY THAT WILL ENHANCE SAFETY AND PROVIDE AN EFFICIENT NETWORK OF ALL TRANSPORTATION MODES

WHEREAS, The North Carolina Department of Transportation is a state agency created in Article 8 of Chapter 143B of the North Carolina General Statutes; and

WHEREAS, the general purpose of the Department of Transportation is to provide for the necessary planning, construction, maintenance and operation of an integrated statewide transportation system for the economical and safe transportation of people and goods provided by the law; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation Complete Streets Policy evaluation focuses on process improvements that ensures consideration and implementation of an integrated statewide transportation system; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation’s 2009 Complete Street Policy has been updated to reflect this intent and purpose; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation’s Complete Street Policy focuses on actions to strengthen institutional support;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the North Carolina Board of Transportation hereby adopts the 2019 amendments to the Complete Streets Policy.

Michael S. Fox

Chairman

August 8, 2019

Date

Janet S. Smith

Secretary of Transportation

August 8, 2019

Date