



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

PAT MCCRORY
GOVERNOR

NICHOLAS J. TENNYSON
SECRETARY

September 1, 2015

MEMORANDUM TO: Division Engineers
District Engineers

FROM: Mike Holder, P.E. 
Chief Engineers

SUBJECT: Policy for Placement of Mail Cluster Box Units in Subdivisions

Several months ago the United States Postal Service (USPS) began implementing a policy for centralized delivery of mail for new developments. This equates to requiring developers of residential subdivisions to provide necessary mail receptacle equipment for centralized mail delivery, i.e. cluster box units (CBU's) in new developments. Most transportation agencies and developers did not know about USPS's new requirement until far into the planning phase, or build out phase of new subdivisions.

As a response to the many requests from land developers and builders, a work group was assembled by the Chief Engineer's Office to study the impacts of accommodating the CBUs on residential subdivision streets. The work group met with industry partners on several occasions and developed a policy for accommodating CBUs on subdivision streets. While the safest and most preferred placement of CBUs is outside the right-of-way, there are cases where it is not feasible to do so.

The attached document will serve as the Department's policy when reviewing plans for placement of CBUs on right-of-way for subdivision streets. This document will also serve for plan review where developers must retrofit subdivisions already built with CBUs and encroach on right-of-way. I think you will find the policy firm enough to determine acceptable safe conditions for typical placement of the CBU's, and flexible enough to make wise decisions for new cases as they evolve.

Please distribute this to the appropriate staff in your Division. If you have questions or need clarification on this policy, please contact Delbert Roddenberry, Operations Program Manager at 919.707.2509.

MLH/drr

Attachment

CC: Delbert Roddenberry,
file

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TRANSPORTATION BUILDING
1 SOUTH WILMINGTON STREET
RALEIGH NC

Placement of Mail Cluster Box Units (CBU) on State Maintained Subdivision Streets
Policy September 1, 2015

The purpose of this policy is to provide administrative and design guidelines for safe and efficient accommodation of delivery and receipt of mail in residential subdivisions or business developments by use of cluster box units (CBU) placed centrally or distributed in groups. These guidelines will apply to roadways eligible for addition to the State system with design speeds of 35 MPH or less within the subdivision/community as referenced in the North Carolina Department of Transportation Subdivision Roads Minimum Construction Standards January -2010.

This policy is written with consideration to United States Postal Service (USPS) guidelines, AASHTO Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, AASHTO Roadside Design Guide, 4th Edition, the NC Administrative Code, and the NC General Statutes. Access to CBU's must be provided in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility guidance.

CBU's are specialized multiple mailbox installations containing a cluster of 8 to 16 or more locked boxes serving multiple postal patrons and mounted on a pedestal or framework per USPS requirements. Multiple CBU's may be located at a mail stop or kiosk at one or more locations within a development as allowed by USPS. Generally, CBU's have such mass that they are not considered crashworthy and must be located outside of the clear area needed for safe recovery of errant vehicles.

Preference shall be given to placement of CBU's in subdivision or development common areas and outside of the road right of way to provide safe and convenient parking and pedestrian access for postal patrons and to minimize impedance to roadway operation. Under extenuating circumstances when such common areas are justifiably not available due to the nature of the development, CBU's may be accommodated within the road right of way in accordance with this policy and subject to approval of the District Engineer

Location Requirements:

CBU sites shall be located internal to the development and shall be located on the right hand side of the roadway in the direction of travel. In general, CBU's should be located in common areas, near lot lines, outside of public utility easements, private storm drainage easements, well outside any clear zones/clear recovery areas and at least 10 feet away from water meters, cleanouts, and hydrants. CBU sites must be selected to preserve necessary lines of sight at intersections, driveways, and horizontal and vertical curves. CBU's shall be located outside the influence area of adjacent intersections and not impede driveways or other functional areas of access. The units shall be 100' minimum from minor street intersections, 200' minimum from primary route intersections. CBU sites shall be located so as to minimize unnecessary travel distance, backing or U-turns. CBU sites shall not be located directly across from one another on opposing sides of the road. Under no circumstances shall the units be placed such that traffic will be negatively affected on existing or proposed streets outside of the subdivision or development.

Turnout Requirements:

A paved turnout shall be required for each CBU site. The turnout pavement shall be consistent with the adjacent roadway pavement structure. A minimum of 25' of full width vehicle storage, exclusive of transition tapers, shall be constructed to serve up to 20 postal patrons. An additional 25' of vehicle

storage, exclusive of transition tapers, will be required for each additional 20 postal patrons, or fraction thereof, that are served at any CBU site. This treatment is applicable to both streets with unpaved shoulder sections, and curb and gutter sections with and without sidewalk. ADA accessibility and compliance must be maintained in each instance. As an exception, no turn out will be required on cul-de-sacs with curb and gutter and roadways having an AADT of 200 vehicles or less, with curb and gutter and an adjacent lane width of 15' or greater and no designated bike lane is provided.

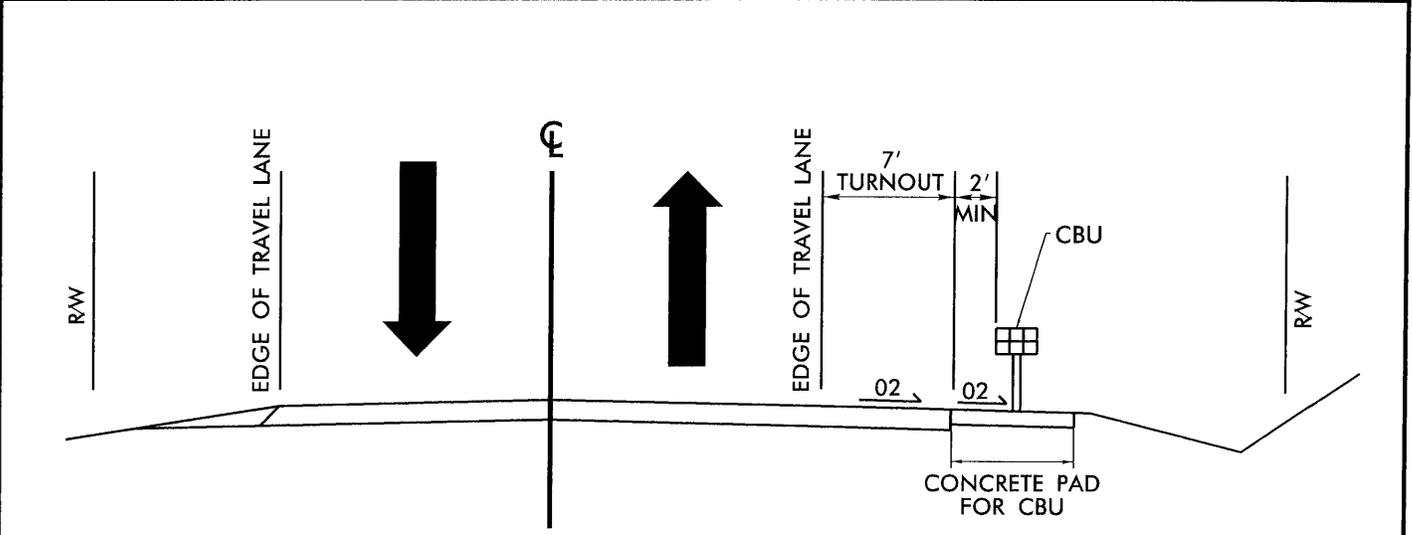
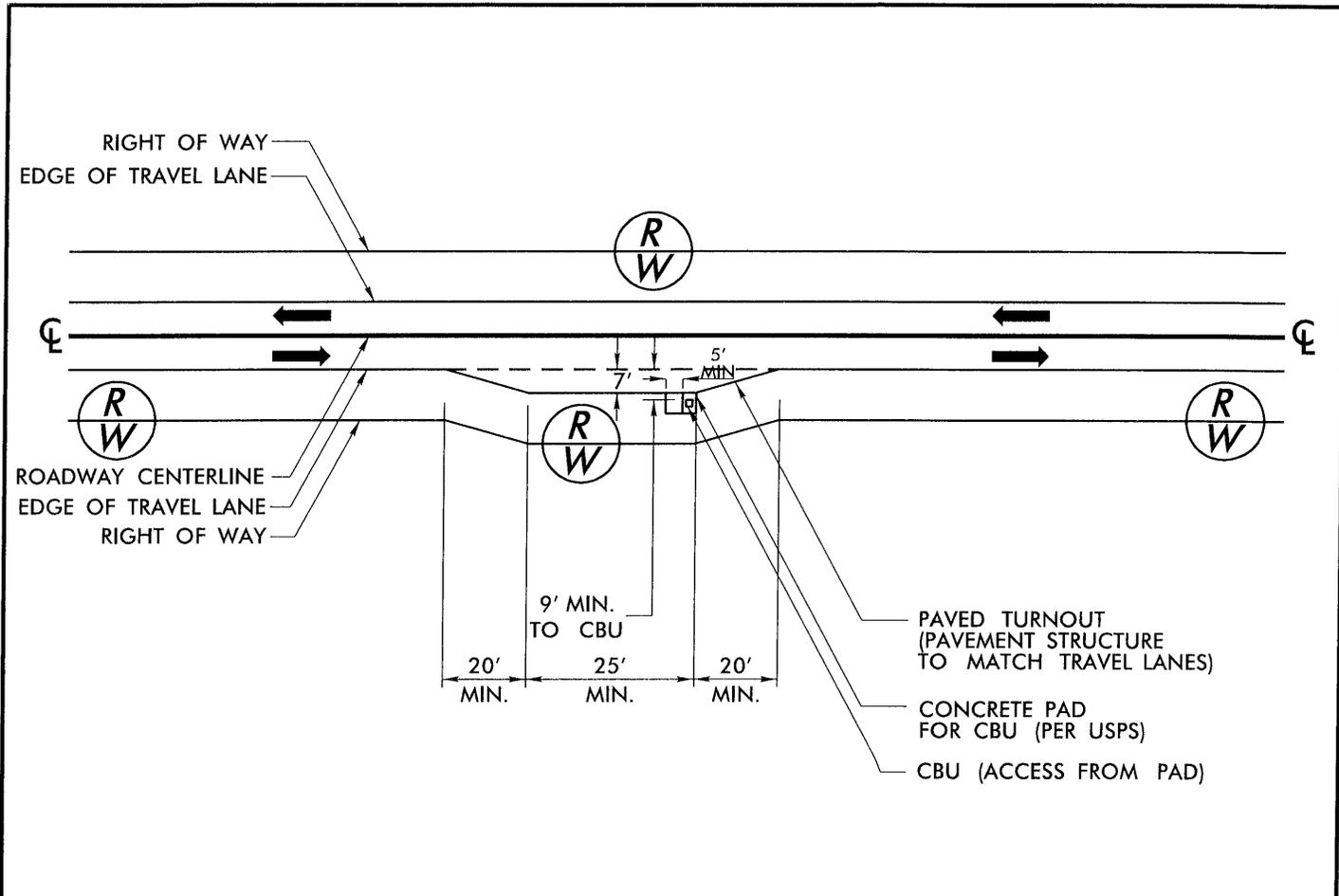
Minimum Design Requirements:

Minimum required design criteria for CBU sites located within the right of way are shown in the attached figures 1 thru 4. Prior to installation, the District Engineer shall review and approve the proposed site placement and design for each CBU. Subdivision plans submitted to the Department shall clearly indicate all proposed CBU site locations and provide appropriate design detail. The designer shall independently coordinate with the USPS and local government for review and approval. Approval of the CBU installation by the Department, in no way constitutes acceptance by the USPS or assurance of mail delivery.

Road Addition and Maintenance Responsibilities:

Prior to road addition, the District Engineer shall inspect each CBU site. If safety, operational or maintenance issues become evident during the road addition process, the CBU will be relocated, modified, or repaired at no cost to the Department prior to road addition.

Upon addition of the road to the State system, NCDOT shall assume maintenance of the paved turn out, shoulder and curb and gutter, ditch, and storm drainage within the right of way in accordance with established minimum maintenance standards. NCDOT shall not own or maintain CBU's or other appurtenances associated with these units such as concrete pads, sidewalk, and wheel chair ramps. The CBU and appurtenances shall be considered an encroachment and administered in accordance with the current edition of the [Policies and Procedures for Accommodating Utilities on Highway Rights of Way](#). In addition, NCDOT is not responsible for clearing snow, ice, limbs, trash accumulation, specialized vegetation management, etc. from associated sidewalk, parking areas (if applicable), and the immediate area around the CBU. These maintenance activities must be provided by mailbox users or a homeowner's association as a condition of the encroachment agreement.



SEE FIGURE 1 PAGE 39, "NCDOT SUBDIVISION ROADS MINIMUM CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS JANUARY 2010" FOR LOCAL AND COLLECTOR ROAD DIMENSIONS.

NOTE: MAINTAIN R/W OFFSET AROUND CBU TURNOUT

FIGURE 1
CBU PLACEMENT FOR SHOULDER SECTION RESIDENTIAL LOCAL AND COLLECTOR SUBDIVISION STREETS

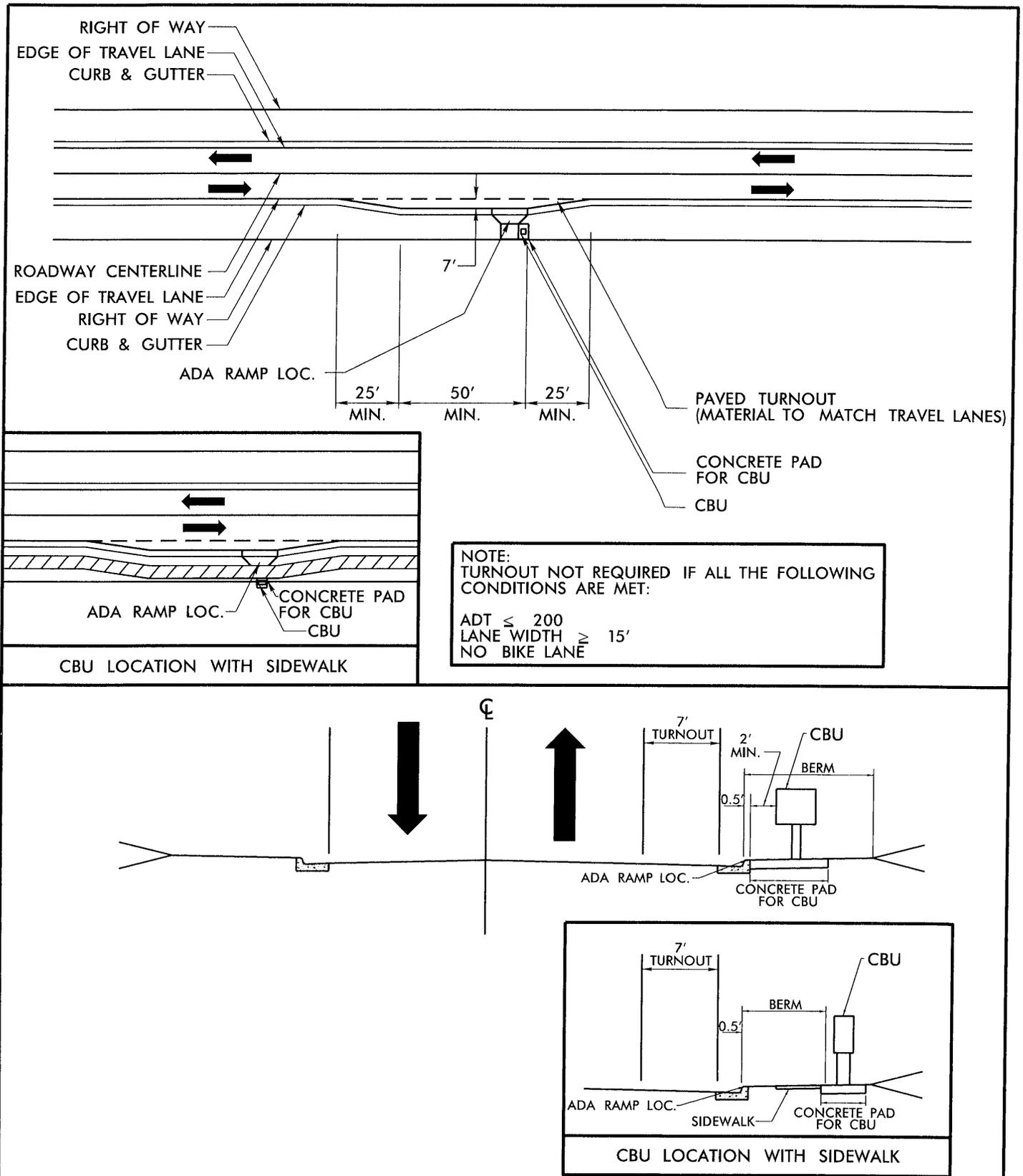
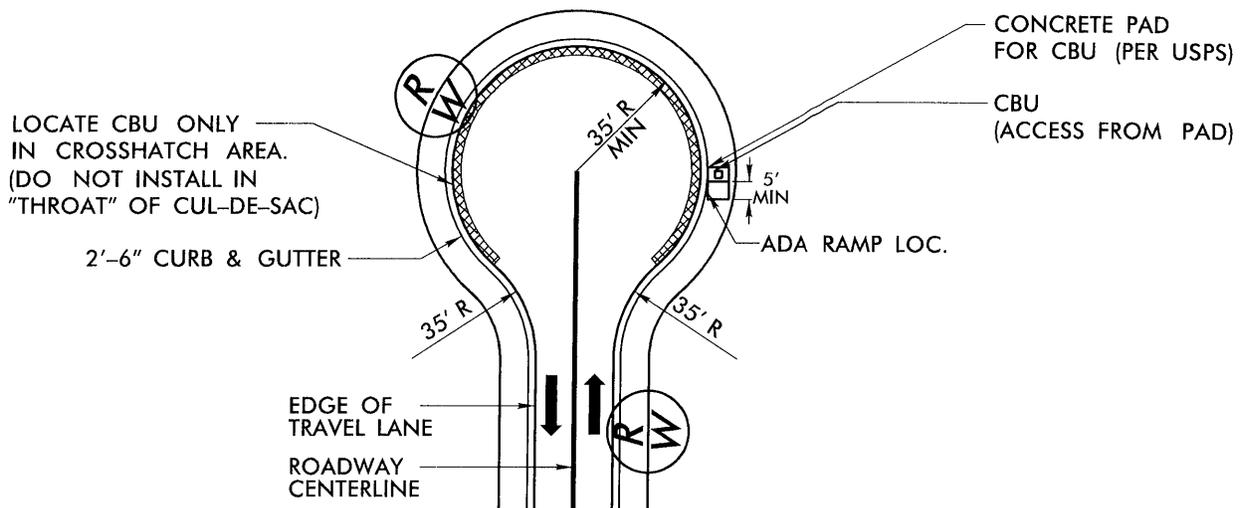


FIGURE 2

CBU PLACEMENT FOR C & G SECTION RESIDENTIAL LOCAL AND COLLECTOR SUBDIVISION STREETS



SEE FIGURE 7 PAGE 45, "NCDOT SUBDIVISION ROADS MINIMUM CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS JANUARY 2010" FOR LOCAL AND COLLECTOR ROAD DIMENSIONS.

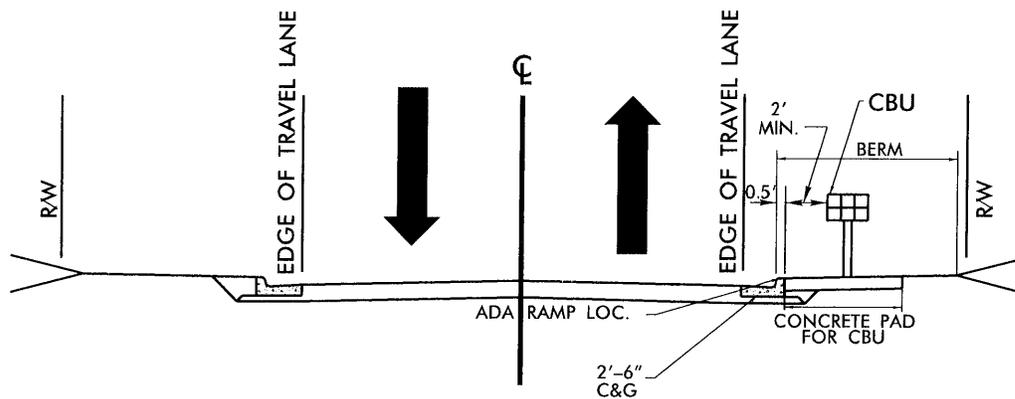
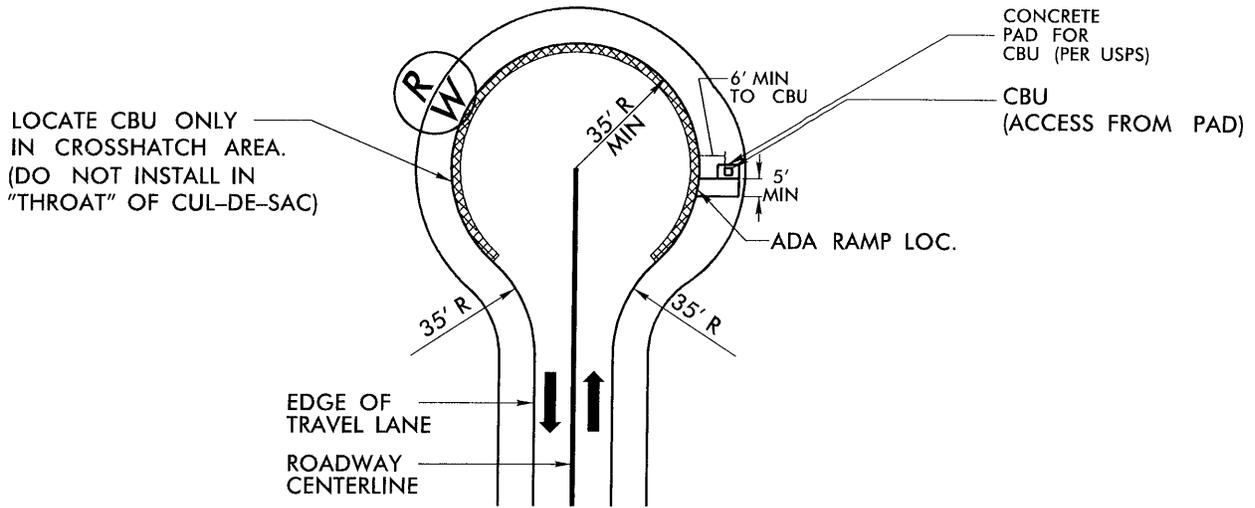


FIGURE 3

**CBU PLACEMENT FOR C & G SECTION RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION STREETS
CUL-DE-SAC**



SEE FIGURE 8 PAGE 46, "NCDOT SUBDIVISION ROADS MINIMUM CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS JANUARY 2010" FOR LOCAL AND COLLECTOR ROAD DIMENSIONS.

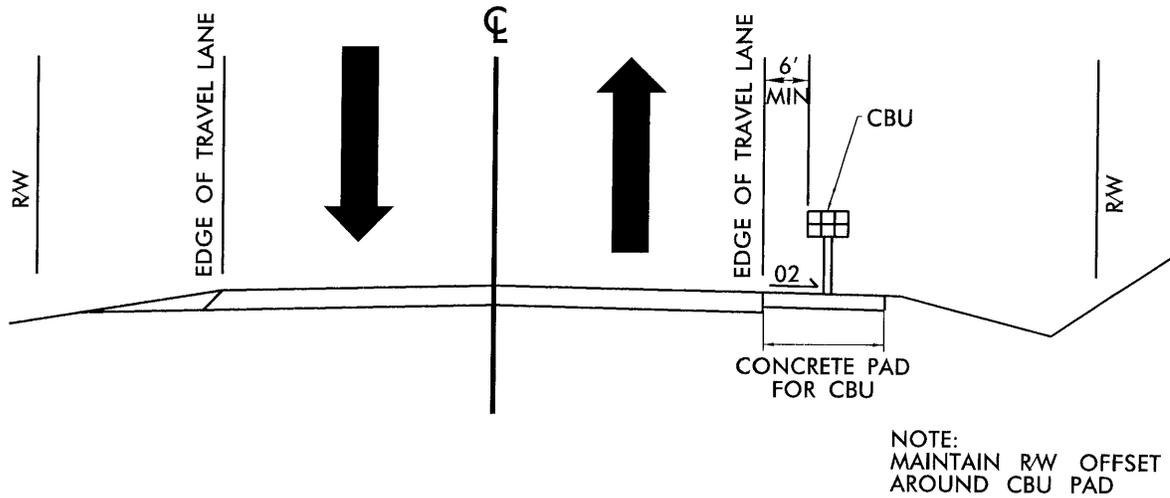


FIGURE 4

CBU PLACEMENT FOR SHOULDER SECTION RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION STREETS
CUL-DE-SAC