

**Date: November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

**To: Durham County Board of Commissioners**  
**Through: Jay Gibson, General Manager**  
**From: Patrick O. Young, AICP, Planning Director**  
**Subject: Transportation Issues Update Memorandum**

### **Executive Summary**

This memo describes two transportation issues: the current policies and procedures of the North Carolina Department of Transportation regarding the construction and maintenance of Durham County multi-modal infrastructure and a process improvement for the inclusion of roads in the State Maintenance System. The 2009 NCDOT Complete Streets Policy, Item 1, was updated this August to better assist transportation engineers and planners to include all modes of transportation in development projects: walking, bicycling and taking transit. The new guidelines enhance the previous 2009 Complete Streets Policy's processes for planning, programming, design, and maintenance. Additionally, as described in Item 2, the Planning Department staff intends to bring forward a blanket resolution for a process improvement regarding the State Maintenance System on October 28, 2019.

### **Recommendation**

This report is provided for information only. Staff recommends that the Board of Commissioners receive an update of the new NCDOT Complete Streets Policy, and provide any comments and questions regarding the project. No further action is required. The DCHC MPO is compiling questions and comments from member jurisdictions to send to NCDOT. Planning Staff can forward any questions from the Board the MPO.

### **Item 1: NCDOT Complete Streets Policy Update**

#### **Background**

To improve mobility within Durham County, pedestrian, bicycle and transit facilities will be required, allowing ease of access to and from key locations. On Aug. 8, 2019, members of the N.C. Board of Transportation unanimously adopted a resolution in support of implementing amendments to the department's Complete Streets Policy. The updated policy assists NCDOT staff engineers, project managers and designers in creating roadways which incorporate all travel modes.

#### *Cost-Share*

The table below shows the updated funding responsibilities and cost share between NCDOT and communities for the addition of multi-modal transportation facilities along street networks.

Complete Street Cost Share			
Facility Type	In Plan	Not in Plan, but Need Identified	Betterment
Pedestrian Facility	NCDOT pays full	Cost Share	Local
Bicycle Facility	NCDOT pays full	NCDOT pays full	Local
Side Path	NCDOT pays full	Cost Share	Local
Greenway Crossing	NCDOT pays full	Cost Share	Local
Bus Pull Out	NCDOT pays full	Cost Share	Local
Bus Stop (pad only)	NCDOT pays full	Cost Share	Local

Bicycle, pedestrian, and public transportation facilities which appear in state, regional, or local transportation plans will be included as part of the proposed roadway project. NCDOT will fully fund the cost of designing, acquiring right of way, and constructing the identified facilities.

### Resurfacing Projects

There is an annual county-level resurfacing schedule for each NCDOT Division which requires NCDOT Division staff to meet with local agencies and identify locations to evaluate Complete Streets improvements. These improvements may include striping, markings and associated signage.

### Bridges

Due to the long useful life of bridges, updates to the refurbishment and replacement process were made to include improved Complete Streets infrastructure. The policy states that NCDOT is responsible for the full cost of bridges and will also bear the cost of any alternative facility requiring equal or lesser right-of-way. Updates are included on bridges with shoulder approach sections, where:

- a pedestrian need is identified through an adopted plan, sufficient deck space will be made available on the replacement bridge for future construction of sidewalks.
- a bicycle need is identified through an adopted plan, sufficient width for bike facilities will be provided.
- a multi-use path or side path need is identified through an adopted plan, sufficient width for the appropriate facility will be provided on and/or below the structure.

### Maintenance

Bicycle and pedestrian improvements within a municipal boundary are subject to local maintenance. A local maintenance agreement will be executed prior to the completion of a construction project.

In instances where a local maintenance agreement is not executed to maintain a bicycle or pedestrian facility, NCDOT will maintain the facility after construction if the bicycle or pedestrian facility lies within NCDOT right-of-way.

### Betterments

All roadway betterment projects or facility needs identified in a project's scoping process, but are not included in a locally adopted plan, require a local agreement. A roadway project betterment is defined as:

- A requested bicycle, pedestrian or public transportation improvement that exceeds the recommendations appearing in a state or locally adopted plan requiring additional roadway width and/or right-of-way
- Aesthetic materials and treatments, if this cost is determined to exceed the cost of standard construction materials
- Landscaping in excess of standard treatments
- Lighting in excess of standard treatments

The incorporation of these incidental facilities requires the local jurisdiction to share the incremental cost of constructing the identified improvements which NCDOT will use to estimate the incremental cost of proposed improvements. The table below shows the cost sharing between NCDOT and the local government for betterment projects which is based on the population of the jurisdiction. Durham's local cost share would be 20% for all betterment projects.

Betterment Cost Share		
Municipal Population	Cost Participation	
	NCDOT	Local
> 100,000	80%	20%
50,000 to 100,000	85%	15%
10,000 to 50,000	90%	10%
< 10,000	95%	5%

### Exceptions

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.

### **Issues and Analysis**

The new NCDOT Complete Streets Policy improves multi-modal mobility and allocates more NCDOT funding in the County for alternative transportation projects including bicycle, pedestrian and transit enhancements identified in plans, as needs or as betterments. Based on the updated Policy, NCDOT will fund all Durham County projects which are included in a state, regional or locally adopted plan. NCDOT will also fully fund any Durham County bicycle facility which is not in the plan, but identified as a need. For all other types of facilities which are identified as a need, but are not in a relevant plan, NCDOT will share the cost with the local jurisdiction. Additionally, all betterment projects located in Durham County or City will require a cost share approach for funding. Projects within a municipal boundary are subject to local maintenance, however, if a local maintenance agreement is not executed, then the NCDOT will maintain the facilities. Therefore, the County would not be responsible for maintaining multi-modal facilities created. There are four Durham County projects impacted by the new Complete Streets Policy and include:

- The Glover Rd Bridge project provides the width for bike lanes (11' vehicle lanes and 5' bike lanes) and future sidewalks. Due to NCDOT's policies, the inclusion of sidewalk construction for the project may be requested by the municipality with NCDOT bearing the full cost.
- The new Wrenn Rd connector project is not designed for bicycle or pedestrian use, but has a berm width for curb and gutter along with sidewalk for potential future development. NCDOT is willing to include these changes to construction if standard policy is requested.
- The Cornwallis Rd grade separation project of the North Carolina Railroad corridor is intended to address safety needs by eliminating car/train conflicts. With the new Complete Streets Policy update, there are potential ROW improvements for alternative modes of transportation at this intersection through NCDOT funding.
- The US 70 project to create six through lanes and an expanded median may provide an opportunity to use the current US 70 alignment as a bike and/or pedestrian facility or local access road which includes transit elements.

### **Item 2: Resolution to Improve State Maintenance System Process**

Jason Watson, Assistant District Engineer with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), has requested consideration of a resolution that would improve the process for adding a roadways located in Durham County to the State Maintenance System. Currently, NCDOT staff must request each road addition individually. Other jurisdictions that have adopted a blanket resolution that allows the addition of the roadway(s) without NCDOT having to ask each time on

a case by case basis. The Planning Department staff intends to bring forward a blanket resolution for consideration by the Board of County Commissioners on October 28, 2019.

**Alternatives**

The Board of Commissioners could choose not to provide input on the Transportation Issues Update.

**Staff Contact**

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