

ITEM 8 – Information

April 18, 2012

Briefing on Comments Received and Proposed Responses for Revising the Regional Complete Streets Guidance and Policy Template

Staff

Recommendation: Receive briefing on comments received and proposed responses for revising the Guidance and Policy Template, and on the schedule for approving a revised document.

Issues: None

Background: At the March 21 meeting, the Board provided comments on a draft Regional Complete Streets Guidance and Policy Template after receiving comments from the Citizens Advisory Committee.

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Planning Board

FROM: Michael Farrell, Transportation Planner
Department of Transportation Planning

SUBJECT: Comments Received and Proposed Responses for Revising the
Regional Complete Streets Guidance and Policy Template

DATE: April 12, 2012

At the March 21st meeting, TPB members provided comments on a draft regional Complete Streets Guidance and Policy Template. The Citizens Advisory Committee and the Virginia Bicycling Federation also submitted comments on the draft document.

Four of the five TPB members who spoke favored adopting a policy rather than a guidance document and template, following the suggestion of the Citizens Advisory Committee. However, the bulk of the comments offered by CAC concerned documentation, to “provide accountability” in terms of whether Complete Streets principles are actually being met. The TPB Technical Committee discussed the draft and comments at its April 6th meeting.

Based on comments received, we have prepared a revised draft that we believe addresses the comments made by the CAC, TPB, and the TPB Technical Committee. The following changes have been made:

- The document has been split into two sections, a Complete Streets Policy and a Complete Streets Guidance and Policy Template. The policy document includes a background section, definitions, and a policy statement encouraging the TPB member jurisdictions to adopt their own policies.
- Specific deadlines have been added to the documentation section, as well as a provision for a regional information clearinghouse.
- A revised TIP sheet has been prepared to document implementation of Complete Streets

The attached draft will be presented for TPB review and comment at the April 18 meeting. After addressing comments received, staff plan to bring a revised version back to the TPB for approval at the May 16 meeting.

DRAFT

Complete Streets Policy for the National Capital Region

4/12/2012
Transportation Planning Board
Item #8

I. Background

The Transportation Planning Board wishes to encourage walking, bicycling, and the use of public transportation as safe, convenient, environmentally friendly, and economical modes of transportation that enhance economic development and promote physical activity, health and independence for all people. These goals are embodied in the TPB's *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region* (2010), COG's *Region Forward* (2010) and the TPB *Vision* (1998). The TPB also believes that the most cost-effective way to accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users is to integrate them into the design of transportation facilities from the beginning, rather than retrofit facilities to accommodate them later.

On June 15th, 2011 the Citizens Advisory Committee requested that the TPB develop and approve a regional policy on Complete Streets, and the TPB Chair directed staff to work with the relevant subcommittees to create a proposal. The resulting *Complete Streets Policy and Guidance* documents have been drafted with extensive input from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee, the Citizens Advisory Committee, the Bus Subcommittee, the Freight Subcommittee, a Stakeholders Workshop, and the TPB Technical Committee.

II. Definitions

(1) COMPLETE STREET.

A complete street safely and adequately accommodates motorized and non-motorized users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, freight vehicles, emergency vehicles, and transit riders of all ages and abilities, in a manner appropriate to the function and context of the facility.

(2) COMPLETE STREETS POLICY.—The term “complete streets policy” means

A directive at the local, state, regional, or federal level that ensures the safe and adequate accommodation, in all phases of project planning, development, and operations, of all users of the transportation network, including pedestrians and transit riders of all ages and abilities, bicyclists, individuals with disabilities, motorists, freight vehicles, and emergency vehicles, in a manner appropriate to the function and context of the relevant facility.

(3) COMPLETE STREETS PRINCIPLE;—The term “complete streets principle” means
A specific component of a Complete Streets policy.

III. Policy Statement

The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board endorses the concept of Complete Streets and strongly encourages its member jurisdictions and agencies that do not already have a Complete Streets policy, or who are revising an existing policy, to adopt a Complete Streets policy that includes common elements that the TPB believes reflect current best practices, as represented by the attached *Complete Streets Guidance and Policy Template*.

IV. Documentation and Reporting

1. Within 120 days of the adoption of this policy, and every two years thereafter, Transportation Planning Board staff shall conduct a survey of the TPB member agencies regarding their adoption and implementation of Complete Streets policies.
2. Within 120 days of the adoption of this policy, and every two years thereafter, Transportation Planning Board member agencies shall report in the regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Database on the pedestrian and bicycle facilities that have been newly created or substantially improved.
3. Within two years of the adoption of this policy, implementation of Complete Streets principles will be documented in the regional Transportation Improvement Program, using the attached TIP submission form. Agencies shall indicate which users shall be accommodated as part of the transportation project, and if a user group will not be accommodated the agency shall indicate the reason why it will not be accommodated.
4. Within two years of the adoption of this policy, the TPB shall create a regional information clearing house, which shall provide access to state and local project web sites where detailed and timely information on the design of transportation projects can be found, so that the public may judge whether and how well such projects implement Complete Streets principles.

V. Promotion

With six months of the adopting of this policy, the TPB will sponsor training on Complete Streets best practices for personnel responsible for the design, construction, and maintenance of streets.

Attachment A

DRAFT

Complete Streets Guidance and Policy Template

4/12/2012

I. Complete Streets Guidance: Ten Elements of an Ideal Complete Streets Policy

The following ten elements, which are endorsed by the National Complete Streets Coalition, should be part of a comprehensive Complete Streets policy. An ideal Complete Streets policy:

- Includes a vision for how and why the community wants to complete its streets.
- Specifies that “all users” includes pedestrians, bicyclists and transit passengers of all ages and abilities as well as trucks, buses and automobiles.
- Encourages street connectivity and aims to create a comprehensive, integrated, connected network for all modes.
- Is adoptable by all agencies to cover all roads.
- Applies to both new and retrofit projects, including design, planning, maintenance, and operations for the entire right of way.
- Makes any exceptions specific and sets a clear procedure that requires high-level approval of exceptions.
- Directs the use of the latest and best design standards while recognizing the need for flexibility in balancing user needs.
- Directs that complete streets solutions will complement the context of the community.
- Establishes performance standards with measurable outcomes.
- Includes specific next steps for implementation of policy, such as
 - Revising agency procedures and regulations to reflect the policy
 - Developing or adopting new design guides
 - Offering training for staff responsible for implementing the policy
 - Gathering data on how well streets are serving different user groups

II. Complete Streets Policy Template

Beginning on the effective date of this policy, all transportation projects in (insert Jurisdiction or Agency) shall accommodate the safety and convenience of all users in accordance with Complete Streets principles.

Inclusions

1. Roadways, shoulders, sidewalks, shared use paths, street crossings, pedestrian signals, signs, street furniture, landscaping, lighting, transit stops and facilities, rail crossings, and all connecting pathways should be designed, constructed, operated and maintained so that all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit vehicles and riders, freight vehicles, emergency vehicles, motorists, and people with disabilities, can travel safely and independently.
2. Transportation projects should address the need for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross facilities as well as travel along them. The design and construction of new facilities should not preclude the provision of future improvements to accommodate future demand for walking and bicycling, especially in order to access transit.
3. Transportation projects should comply with up-to-date design standards, particularly standards relating to providing access for individuals with disabilities.
4. Complete Streets principles should be applied in due consideration of the urban, suburban, or rural context in which a project is located, as well as applicable federal, state, local environmental requirements, and the effects of right of way widening on adjacent property owners and residents. While all users should be accommodated, modal priorities may vary by area and facility.

Exemptions

Project-specific exemptions shall be approved by a senior manager of the responsible agency.

This policy does not apply:

1. To a new transportation facility construction or modification project for which, as of the effective date of the adoption of the policy, at least 30 percent of the design phase is completed.
2. To a transportation facility which prohibits, by law, use of the facility by specified users, in which case a greater effort should be made to accommodate those specified users elsewhere in the travel corridor.
3. When the cost to the exempted project in achieving compliance with the applicable complete streets policy would be excessively disproportionate (as per FHWA guidance), as compared to the need or probable use of a particular complete street; or,

4. When the existing and planned population and employment densities or level of transit service around a particular roadway are so low that there is a documented absence of a need (as per FHWA guidance) to implement the applicable complete streets policy.
5. To passenger and freight rail projects, which shall not be required to accommodate other motorized users in the railway right of way, although safe and adequate rail crossings for motorized and non-motorized users should be provided.
6. To transportation projects which do not provide for direct use by the public, such as maintenance facilities, drainage and stormwater management facilities, education and training, transportation security projects, beautification, and equipment purchase or rehabilitation.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FOR FY 2011-2016 PROJECT DESCRIPTION FORM



BASIC PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Submitting Agency:
2. Project Name (from CLRP Project):
3. Phase Name:

	Prefix	Route	Name	Modifier
4. Facility:				
5. From (_ at):				
6. To:				

7. Description:
8. Agency Phase ID:
9. Projected Completion Year:
10. Project Status:
 - _ New Project
 - _ In previous TIP, proceeding as scheduled
 - _ In previous TIP, delayed or reprogrammed
11. Completed:

Environmental Review

12. Type: _ PCE; _ CE; _ DEA; _ EA; _ FONSI; _ DEIS; _ FEIS; _ F4; _ N/A
13. Status: _ Proposed for preparation; _ Under preparation; _ Prepared for review; _ Under review; _ Approved

Complete Streets

13. Does this project provide for direct use by the public?
 - Yes (e.g. roadways, shoulders, sidewalks, shared use paths, street crossings, pedestrian signals, signs, street furniture, landscaping, lighting, transit stops and facilities, rail crossings)
 - No (e.g. transportation support facility, drainage project, equipment purchase/rehabilitation, environmental mitigation, enhancement/beautification, security, education/training)

If Yes, answer #14

14. The following users will be accommodated on this facility:
 - All Pedestrians Bicyclists Transit vehicles and riders Freight vehicles
 - Emergency vehicles Motorists People with disabilities
15. If no accommodations are included above, identify the reason or the specific exemptions from the appropriate Dropdown Menu :
 - As of the effective date of the adoption of the policy, at least 30% of the design phase is complete
 - The affected facility prohibits, by law, use by the user group(s) omitted above
 - The cost of accommodating the omitted user group(s) would be excessively disproportionate as compared to the need or probable use
 - There is a documented absence of a need within the design life of the facility
 - Accommodation of the omitted user group(s) on the affected facility would be inconsistent with local, State, or agency laws, policies, or plans.
 - Other (Explain: _____)

Capital Costs

FISCAL YEAR	AMOUNT	PHASE	SOURCE	FED	STA	LOC

CLRP PROJECT DESCRIPTION FORM
