

Implementing VDOT's Accommodations Policy (Complete Streets)

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To paraphrase a retired FHWA employee:

*"Implementation begins at the top...
otherwise any policy will sit on the shelf".*

Our "Top" was two fold.....

A.) The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) which adopted the Accommodations Policy on March 18, 2004. They directed VDOT to implement it on all projects which had not reached scoping as of that date.

(This is the Board that decides which projects will receive funding so the design can proceed.)

B.) The Top Administrator (Internal advocate, “Torch bearer”)

Pierce Homer, Secretary of Transportation

What now?

Familiarity – Time is needed for staff to learn the intricacies of the policy and determine how it impacts their division practices and procedures. Training classes were held but not all questions could be addressed. Will my project need more funding? What does this exception mean?

Consistency - How do you determine if all Districts are implementing the policy consistently? Mr. Homer asked the State Auditor to answer that question. They prepared a survey of questions. Did they get the same answer in Norfolk as they did in Nova?

Good Intentions don't always = good results

While staff throughout the state were trying to implement the policy to the best of their knowledge, due to their personal experiences.....they often made different decisions.

So how do you get consistency ?

Create an Implementation Team consisting of members from each division (Design, Land Development, Maintenance, etc.) to clarify policy, revise forms, checklists and manuals.

Above and beyond....raising awareness

Implementing a policy is never static... new design procedures at VDOT have made us recognize many projects need to be addressed earlier than scoping ... at contract stage or during the initial feasibility study.

Examples are:

- *PPTA's – Private Public Transportation Acts – prior to negotiations*
- *Design/Build projects – Contracts must be written to prevent cost savings proposals which impact the bike/ped facilities.*
- *Traffic Impact Analysis (527's) for large developer projects*
- *Interchange Justification (or Modification) Reports*
- *NEPA documents – often these only address recreation facilities*

So what will be needed tomorrow to
further mainstream this field?