

# **New Jersey Complete Streets policy**

signed by Commissioner Stephen Dilts

December 10, 2009

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION POLICY

### I. PURPOSE

To create and implement a Complete Streets Policy in New Jersey through the planning, design, construction, maintenance and operation of new and retrofit transportation facilities within public rights of way that are federally or state funded, including projects processed or administered through the Department's Capital Program.

### II. DEFINITIONS

A Complete Street is defined as means to provide safe access for all users by designing and operating a comprehensive, integrated, connected multi-modal network of transportation options.

### III. BACKGROUND

The benefits of Complete Streets are many and varied:

- Complete Streets improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, children, older citizens, non-drivers and the mobility challenged as well as those that cannot afford a car or choose to live car free.
- Provide connections to bicycling and walking trip generators such as employment, education, residential, recreation, retail centers and public facilities.
- Promote healthy lifestyles.
- Create more livable communities.
- Reduce traffic congestion and reliance on carbon fuels thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Complete Streets make fiscal sense by incorporating sidewalks, bike lanes, safe crossings and transit amenities into the initial design of a project, thus sparing the expense of retrofits later.

### IV. POLICY

The New Jersey Department of Transportation shall implement a Complete Streets policy through the planning, design, construction, maintenance and operation of new and retrofit transportation facilities, enabling safe access and mobility of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users of all ages and abilities. This includes all projects funded through the Department's Capital Program. The Department strongly encourages the adoption of similar policies by regional and local jurisdictions who apply for funding through Local Aid programs.

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION POLICY

1. Create a comprehensive, integrated, connected multi-modal network by providing connections to bicycling and walking trip generators such as employment, education, residential, recreational and public facilities, as well as retail and transit centers.
2. Provide safe and accessible accommodations for existing and future pedestrian, bicycle and transit facilities.

3. Establish a checklist of pedestrian, bicycle and transit accommodations such as accessible sidewalks curb ramps, crosswalks, countdown pedestrian signals, signs, median refuges, curb extensions, pedestrian scale lighting, bike lanes, shoulders and bus shelters with the presumption that they shall be included in each project unless supporting documentation against inclusion is provided and found to be justifiable.
4. Additionally, in rural areas, paved shoulders or a multi-use path shall be included in all new construction and reconstruction projects on roadways used by more than 1,000 vehicles per day.  
Paved shoulders provide safety and operational advantages for all road users. Shoulder rumble strips are not recommended when used by bicyclists, unless there is a minimum clear path of four feet in which a bicycle may safely operate. If there is evidence of heavy pedestrian usage then sidewalks shall be considered in the project.
5. Establish a procedure to evaluate resurfacing projects for complete streets inclusion according to length of project, local support, environmental constraints, right-of-way limitations, funding resources and bicycle and/or pedestrian compatibility.
6. Transportation facilities are long-term investments that shall anticipate likely future demand for bicycling and walking facilities and not preclude the provision of future improvements.
7. Address the need for bicyclists and pedestrians to cross corridors as well as travel along them. Even where bicyclists and pedestrians may not commonly use a particular travel corridor that is being improved or constructed, they will likely need to be able to cross that corridor safely and conveniently. Therefore, the design of intersections, interchanges and bridges shall accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians in a manner that is safe, accessible and convenient.
8. Design bicycle and pedestrian facilities to the best currently available standards and practices including the New Jersey Roadway Design Manual, the AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, AASHTO's Guide for the Planning, Design and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities, the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices and others as related.
9. Research, develop and support new technologies in improving safety and mobility.
10. Make provisions for pedestrians and bicyclists when closing roads, bridges or sidewalks for construction projects as outlined in NJDOT Policy #705 – Accommodating Pedestrian and Bicycle Traffic During Construction.
11. Improvements should also consider connections for Safe Routes to Schools, Safe Routes to Transit, Transit Villages, trail crossings and areas or population groups with limited transportation options.
12. Establish an incentive within the Local Aid Program for municipalities and counties to develop and implement a Complete Streets policy.
13. Improvements must comply with Title VI/Environmental Justice, Americans with

Disabilities Act (ADA) and should complement the context of the surrounding community.

14. Implement training for Engineers and Planners on Bicycle/Pedestrian/Transit policies and integration of non-motorized travel options into transportation systems.

15. Establish Performance Measures to gauge success.

#### V. EXEMPTIONS

Exemptions to the Complete Streets policy must be presented for final decision to the Capital Program Screening Committee in writing by the appropriate Assistant Commissioner and documented with supporting data that indicates the reason for the decision and are limited to the following:

- 1) Non-motorized users are prohibited on the roadway.
- 2) Scarcity of population, travel and attractors, both existing and future, indicate an absence of need for such accommodations.
- 3) Detrimental environmental or social impacts outweigh the need for these accommodations.
- 4) Cost of accommodations is excessively disproportionate to cost of project, more than twenty percent (20%) of total cost.
- 5) The safety or timing of a project is compromised by the inclusion of Complete Streets.

An exemption other than those listed above must be documented with supporting data and must be approved by the Capital Program Committee along with written approval by the Commissioner of Transportation.

#### VI. AUTHORITY

N.J.S.A. Title 27