

| POLICY NUMBER: | | POLICY NAME: | |
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| HWYS 2 | | Complete Streets Policy | |
| ADOPTION DATE: | July 7, 2025 | LAST UPDATED: | May 23, 2025 |
| POLICY APPROVED BY: | Commissioner, NHDOT | SIGNATURE: |  |
| RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: | Highway Safety Office | CONTACT PERSON: | Highway Safety Administrator |
| REQUIREMENTS: | | REFERENCES: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSA 21-L:2 • RSA 265:60 • New Hampshire Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan, August, 2023 • Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), 2022 • The Complete Streets Policy Framework, Smart Growth America, 2023 |

POLICY STATEMENT

Pursuant to RSA 21-L:2 II(a), The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) shall be responsible for “planning, developing, and maintaining a state transportation network which will provide for safe and convenient movement of people and goods throughout the state by means of a system of highways, railroads, air service, mass transit, and other practicable modes of transportation, in order to support state growth and economic development and promote the general welfare of the citizens of the state.” This policy refines the statutory responsibility to emphasize the safety of all modes and road users, including vulnerable road users and those using public transit.

SCOPE

This policy shall apply to all NHDOT projects and work activities. New Hampshire municipalities and transportation planning organizations are encouraged to adopt a similar Complete Streets Policy within their respective jurisdictions.

DEFINITIONS

Complete Streets: Roadways designed and operated to prioritize safety, comfort, and access to destinations for all road users, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users. Complete Streets are designed to be context sensitive. Complete Streets is a type of planning process, not just a specific outcome, and will look different in a variety of contexts.

Context: The surrounding setting of a NHDOT transportation facility including density of abutting property (rural, village, suburban, urban, etc.), scenic and aesthetic nature, historic and environmental resources, land use (agricultural, commercial, residential, etc.), modes of travel (trucks, cars, bicyclists, pedestrians, etc.), and traffic volumes.

Target Speed: The highest operating speed at which vehicles should ideally operate on a roadway in a specific context. Roadway designs should include elements that discourage speeds higher than the target speed.

Speed Limits: Speed limits are determined by the NH General Court by statute (RSA 265:60) based on road context. Variations of the statutory speed shall be based on an engineering and traffic investigation.

Any additional definitions related to this policy may be viewed on the Standard Operating System (SOS) [Approved Definitions](#) page.

COMMENTS/ACTIONS

1. Commitment and Vision

Highways and streets that are safe for the most vulnerable road users are inherently safer for all road users, therefore, the NHDOT will develop guidance through this policy and supplemental procedures to ensure system modifications are routinely planned, designed, constructed, and maintained in a way to enable safe and efficient access for all modes of transportation.

2. Access to Transportation

The NHDOT recognizes that by choice or circumstance, not all road users have access to a motor vehicle and therefore all legal modes of travel should be considered as part of NHDOT system modifications.

3. Policy Partnering and Collaboration

The NHDOT will coordinate with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), municipalities, Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs), Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Complete Streets Advisory Committees (CSACs), transit operators, and other appropriate agencies to implement a Complete Streets approach consistent with this policy.

- a. **Outreach:** NHDOT will coordinate stakeholder meetings on a recurring basis with internal employees and external partners to discuss and document the implementation of this Complete Streets policy.

- b. **Promotion:** The NHDOT will continue to promote Complete Street elements and best practices both internally and externally to create awareness of Complete Streets benefits including promotional material (handouts/webpage).
- c. **Training:** The NHDOT will develop training tools for NHDOT staff and our external partners to help others embrace and implement Complete Streets practices.

4. Project-Specific Coordination

The NHDOT will use consensus building with project stakeholders (municipalities, abutters, facility users including vulnerable road users, and other appropriate stakeholders) as well as public outreach efforts to inform our complete streets approach on projects from conception through construction and maintenance. Maintenance and other non-capital projects will have a less formal process for specific project coordination.

- a. **Design Guidelines:** The NHDOT will continue to supplement and revise existing guidelines and design standards for transportation facilities to incorporate Complete Streets strategies, including target speed, and remove impediments for non-motorized modes of transportation. Procedures will be developed to provide guidance material based on roadway classification and/or tiers, context, and scope of work.
- b. **Innovation:** The NHDOT will consider alternate measures to meet expanding motor vehicle demand. The NHDOT will assess established and accepted guidance pertaining to acceptable levels of motor vehicle delay for all highway projects and traffic impact assessments to minimize lanes and support Complete Streets elements in all designs.
- c. **Project Documentation:** Project Development documentation shall be updated and/or developed to ensure informed and consistent decisions are being made relative to the incorporation of this policy. Considerations should be given to the following:
 - i. Planning/purpose and need
 - ii. Develop an Alternatives Analysis template for planning/preliminary design phases that include discussion on Complete Streets considerations.
 - iii. Revise the Front Office Project Information Sheet (FOPIS) to discuss Complete Streets considerations.
- d. **Exceptions:** The NHDOT will develop a Complete Streets design exception procedure to document when specific project conditions are not able to accommodate best practices. The exception procedure will include a consistent set of conditions and/or types of projects that warrant an exception. The exception procedure will also include the level of approval needed based on a set of conditions and/or the type of project.

5. Maintenance of Complete Streets Elements

- a. Complete streets elements need not only be constructed but also maintained. When maintenance of the element is not currently within the realm or practicality of the NHDOT, the NHDOT will seek an agreement with the municipality to do so.

- b. The NHDOT will continually seek ways to minimize maintenance.
- 6. **Performance Measures:** The NHDOT will develop measures of effectiveness to determine the level of success in implementing this policy. Such measures may include pedestrian/bicyclist level of stress, pedestrian/bicycle volumes, or vulnerable road user transportation funding.
- 7. **Review and Amendments**
 - a. Any previous references or guidance related to policies, directives, procedures, manuals, and forms not included in the SOS are superseded by approved SOS documents
 - b. The SOS and all documents pertaining to it will be located in the [Index](#) on the Department's Intranet, accessible to all employees with computer access. For employees without computer access, hard copies of the SOS will be made available upon request and at all Department work facilities.

AMENDMENT RECORD

This policy is reviewed every two years to ensure its continuing relevance and accuracy. Record any amendments below.

| Date | Comments | Name | Title |
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| 7/7/2025 | Original Policy Adopted | William Cass, PE | Commissioner |