



## Purpose

To provide information and guidance for the preparation of a project Design Decision for the deferral of design elements associated with Complete Streets projects.

## Background

The Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has incorporated the principles of Complete Streets into its practices to better provide access with all users in mind, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transportation users, on WSDOT projects constructed on state highways consistent with RCW 47.04.035. Design Manual 1100.03(3) identifies the screening criteria used to determine which WSDOT projects implement the principles of Complete Streets unless a documented justification (Design Decision) to defer is approved by the Region Administrator or delegate. The decision framework outlined below provides additional guidance associated with the process to identify and document reasons to not implement Complete Streets elements as part of specific projects, in part or whole.

## Direction

Follow the Complete Streets project screening as outlined in DM 1100.03(3). For projects determined to be designed and developed as a Complete Streets project, delivering a Complete Streets project that does not meet a Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) of 2 or better for walking and bicycling facilities is a deferral. Deferrals include both '*partial implementation*' and '*full deferral*' of complete streets elements (see Design Decision – Complete Streets Deferral). Below is the process to justify a Complete Streets deferral:

### **Alternatives Development**

In alignment with the principles of practical design, undertake a good faith effort to develop a preferred design solution that balances a project's baseline and complete street needs and constraints while providing multimodal benefits to each category of roadway user. This process includes developing multiple alternatives that are thoroughly analyzed and presented in the Design Decision document. As part of this effort for Complete Streets projects, develop at least one alternative that fully meets the goals of Complete Streets (i.e., LTS 1 or 2). Consider alternatives including, but not limited to:

- Deferral of baseline scope in part or whole to a future project
- Reallocation of roadway space (e.g., reducing the number of lanes and/or lane widths)
- Reduction of the target speeds (see DM 1103.03)
- Providing a parallel shared use path bridge or replacement roadway bridge for existing bridges (see 'Impacts to Existing Structures' section below for more information)



## Documentation

Justify a decision to defer by preparing a Design Decision for the Design Documentation Package – Section 2.4 based on the *'Design Decision - Complete Streets Deferral'* template, which is approved by the Regional Administrator or delegate.

Use the *'Design Decision - Complete Streets Deferral'* template and the following metrics/considerations to assess each alternative and justify project decisions to explain the reasoning for decisions to defer elements:

- Safety Performance and Operational Performance<sup>1</sup>
  - Assess the exposure, frequency of fatalities and serious injuries, and severity of crashes for all user groups.
  - Assess the network connectivity, and potential demand.
- Project Cost
  - Provide an up-to-date “scoping” level cost estimate or cost estimate range for all alternatives presented in the Design Decision.
    - If fully meeting the goals of Complete Streets would result in a significant increase to the cost of original baseline scope (e.g., greater than 50% cost increase) this may support a deferral decision. This could be the result of adding a significant amount of right of way, structures, storm water conveyance, utility relocations, etc. to accommodate Complete Streets elements.
- Impacts to Delivery Schedule
  - Assess impacts to the project’s delivery schedule.
    - If fully meeting the goals of Complete Streets results in delay that is deemed unacceptable<sup>2</sup> to project delivery, this may support a deferral decision. Delay may be associated with adding significant or complicated scope, difficulties in reaching agreement with local jurisdictions and communities, acquiring right of way, additional impacts resulting in a delay in NEPA, or acquiring permits, etc.
    - Consider schedule delay only when every reasonable effort has been made to adequately plan for and advance project delivery in a timely manner.

---

<sup>1</sup> Priority should be given to full Complete Street implementation when it is anticipated to result in a significant improvement to fatal and serious crash potential, network connectivity, and/or access, with due consideration to serving vulnerable populations and overburdened communities.

<sup>2</sup> When determining whether possible delay is unacceptable, the following issues may be relevant: speed and severity of asset deterioration with significant implications, fish passage barrier injunction due date, the potential for significant impact to fatal and serious crashes with delay in construction of mitigation, utility relocation, and/or internal and external workforce issues such as the annual contracting cycle.



Development Division

Multimodal Development and Delivery

- Impacts to Existing Structure(s)
  - Assess impacts to existing structures (e.g., bridge structures, large walls, or tunnels)
    - If a structure is not to be replaced as part of the original scope, consider alternatives that are feasible with and without replacing the structure.
      - If a bridge replacement alternative appears viable, contact the Bridge and Structure Office to determine whether that bridge is on the replacement needs list and its priority ranking.
    - If fully meeting the goals of Complete Streets significantly impacts or necessitates replacement of major existing infrastructure, this may support a deferral decision.

Fish passage projects follow Design Bulletin #22-02 Complete Streets Process for Fish Passage. As such, fish passage projects are not required to provide the full justification for deferrals and complete the standard Design Decision for Complete Streets deferrals outlined above. For fish passage projects, document a decision to defer and provide forward compatibility with Complete Streets in the Design Documentation Package – Section 2.4 with a *'Design Decision - Complete Streets Deferral for Fish Passage'* template. Region Administrator approval is not required. Provide additional documentation in the Basis of Design as detailed in Design Bulletin #22-02 – Complete Streets Process for Fish Passage.

Upon approval, upload the *'Design Decision - Complete Streets Deferral'* template or *'Design Decision - Complete Streets Deferral for Fish Passage'* template to Enterprise Content Management (ECM) to be included as part of Section 2.4 in the project's DDP and email a copy to HQ CPDM Deputy Director for Capital Programs, Active Transportation Strategic Policy Administrator, and the project's ASDE, with a copy to the Region Administrator.

For questions or information on how to implement this Design Bulletin, please contact your Assistant State Design Engineer.

MG:km:kl