

# Developing a Regional Complete Streets Policy Statement for North Central Texas

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

August 17, 2011



North Central Texas  
Council of Governments

# Agenda

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- ▶ Complete Streets Re-cap
- ▶ NCTCOG Complete Streets Policy Statement Overview
- ▶ ‘Resolution Supporting Complete Streets In North Central Texas’
- ▶ Importance of Having a Complete Streets Policy
- ▶ Results
- ▶ Next Steps
- ▶ Discussion



# What are Complete Streets?



Complete Streets are safe, comfortable, and convenient for travel for everyone, regardless of age or ability – motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transportation riders.

# What Complete Streets Are NOT...

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- ▶ Prescriptive: not a ‘one size fits all’ approach
- ▶ A bike lane on every roadway
  - ▶ Complete Streets approaches roadway planning and design in a context sensitive manner that focuses on meeting the needs of all roadway users.
  - ▶ A rural road with paved shoulders is a great opportunity to capture a complete street.
- ▶ Something that happens overnight
  - ▶ It is a gradual process – incremental progress is still progress!



# Complete Streets Policies

A photograph of a city street scene. In the foreground, a person wearing a white shirt, blue pants, and sunglasses is riding a bicycle towards the camera. The bicycle has a basket on the front. In the background, a white bus with blue accents is driving away. There are several American flags hanging from poles along the street. A traffic light on the left shows a green light. The scene is set on a sunny day with trees and buildings in the background.

A complete streets policy ensures that the entire right-of-way is planned, designed, and operated to provide safe access for all users.

# Streets Can Benefit Communities

Increase capacity

Improve safety

Better health

Economic growth

Lower emissions

Reduce costs

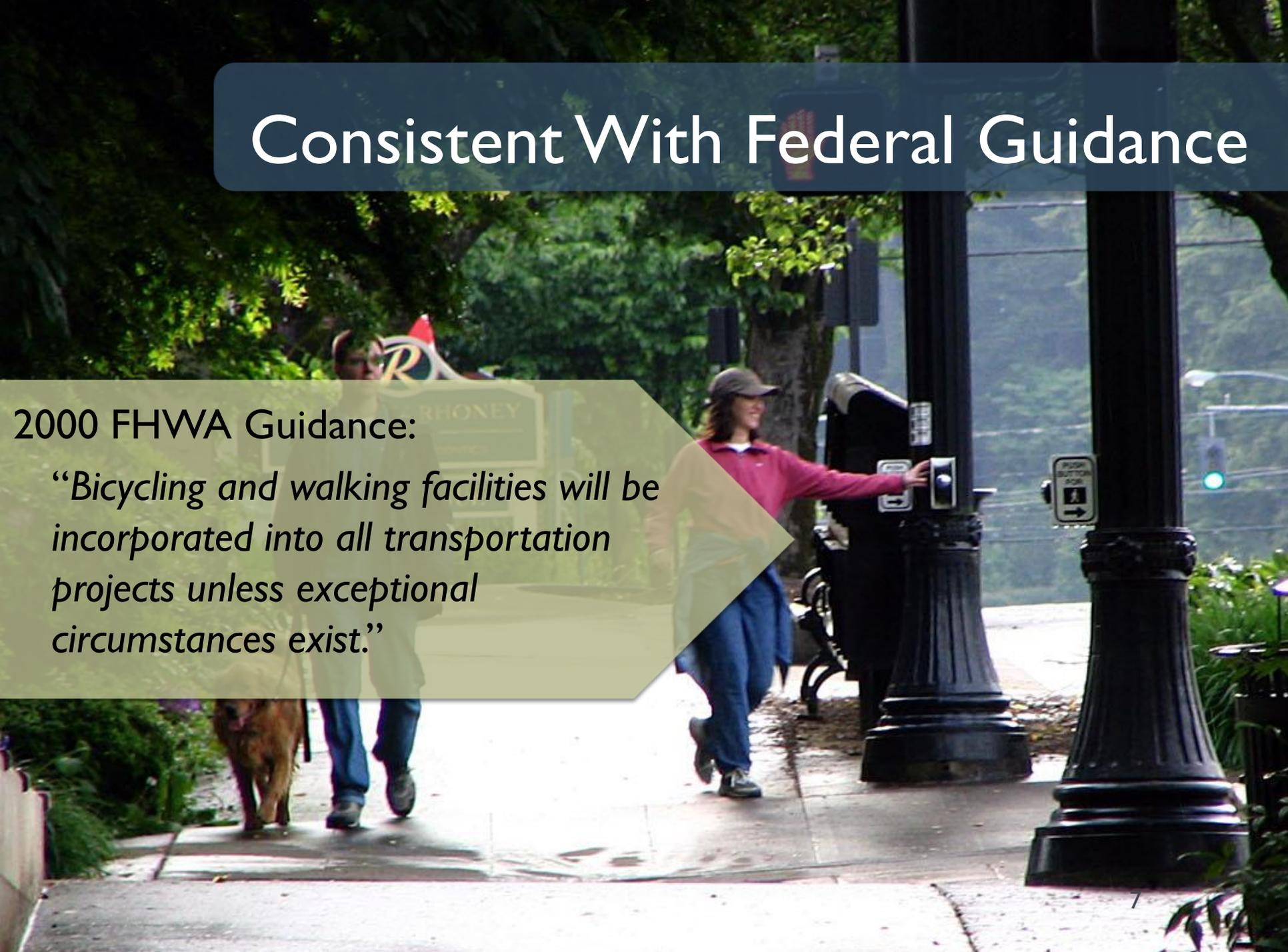
Smarter growth

Provide choices

# Consistent With Federal Guidance

2000 FHWA Guidance:

*“Bicycling and walking facilities will be incorporated into all transportation projects unless exceptional circumstances exist.”*



# The Tremendous Potential

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- ▶ Of all U.S. trips:
  - 50% are under three miles
  - 28% are one mile or less
  - 72% of trips one mile or less are driven
- ▶ Walking is the second most common form of travel representing 10.9% of all trips.



# NCTCOG Complete Streets Policy Statement

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- ▶ Original presentation at the May 18, 2011 BPAC Meeting
- ▶ Discussion after presentation provided starting point for the draft document. Main items discussed:
  - ▶ Policy should allow flexibility at the local level
  - ▶ Consistency with NCTCOG working documents such as Mobility 2035, etc.
- ▶ Policy Statement drafted during June – July 2011
- ▶ Draft document provided on-line and at the August 17, 2011 BPAC Meeting



# NCTCOG Complete Streets Policy Statement Overview

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- ▶ **Broken out into 7 sections:**
  - ▶ 1. Background
  - ▶ 2. Consistency with Federal and State Guidance and Regulation
  - ▶ 3. Policy Statement
  - ▶ 4. Implementation
  - ▶ 5. Local Implementation Guidance
  - ▶ 6. Exceptions
  - ▶ 7. Evaluation



# I. Background

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- ▶ **NCTCOG efforts that support Complete Streets**
  - ▶ Mobility 2035
  - ▶ Bicycle and Pedestrian Program
- ▶ **The many benefits of Complete Streets**
  - ▶ Safety
  - ▶ Ease congestion
  - ▶ Economic revitalization
  - ▶ Improved air quality
  - ▶ Offer choice: children and seniors
  - ▶ Improve congestion



## 2. Consistency With Federal And State Guidance And Regulation

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- ▶ **Congress**

- ▶ ISTEPA
- ▶ TEA-21
- ▶ SAFETEA-LU

- ▶ **USDOT**

- ▶ 'Policy Statement on Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodation Regulations and Recommendations' – March 2010

- ▶ **TxDOT**

- ▶ Guidelines Emphasizing Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations' Memorandum – March 2011



### 3. Policy Statement

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- ▶ Guidance not a requirement.
- ▶ Intent: Local governments will consider all modes of transportation during the planning, design, construction, and operation phases.
- ▶ Encourages local governments to adopt an official Complete Streets Policy.



## 4. Implementation

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### ▶ A.

- ▶ Integration in the development of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), products of its Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).
- ▶ NCTCOG will promote the use of Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) planning.

### ▶ B.

- ▶ Support the development of a complete system of bikeways and pedestrian facilities, including the continued development of the Regional Veloweb.
  - ▶ Planning of context-appropriate facilities.
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## 5. Local Implementation Guidance

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- ▶ Encourage project sponsors to consider bicyclists and pedestrians in the planning and design of all proposed transportation projects, regardless of funding source, where bicycles and pedestrians are permitted by law.
- ▶ Project sponsors are responsible for determining the most appropriate facility.
- ▶ Ensure that people with disabilities have equitable opportunities to use the public rights-of-way system - Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (*Public Law 101-336*)



## 5. Local Implementation Guidance

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- ▶ **Local Implementation Strategies:** NCTCOG encourages all jurisdictions to utilize these key strategies for all transportation projects.
  - ▶ Planning - review codes and encourage public participation
  - ▶ Design - provide appropriate bicycle and pedestrian accommodations
  - ▶ Construction - maintain accessibility for all users during construction
  - ▶ Operations - to include traffic calming, signal retiming and establishing maintenance programs



## 6. Exceptions

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- ▶ Exceptions should be rare.
- ▶ Encourages local governments to adopt an official Complete Streets exception process that involves enhanced public input and to officially document exceptions when they occur.
- ▶ Includes list of possible exceptions :
  - ▶ Non-motorized use prohibited by law
  - ▶ Cost exceeds 20% of total project
  - ▶ Documented absence of current and future need
  - ▶ Public consensus that the accommodation is unwanted



## 7. Evaluation

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- ▶ Evaluate and update at least annually.
- ▶ Allows for future amendments to the Policy.



# 'Resolution Supporting Complete Streets In North Central Texas' (Attachment I)

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- ▶ Resolution to be presented to the Regional Transportation Council (RTC)
- ▶ Intent: to officially 'adopt' the NCTCOG Complete Streets Policy Statement
- ▶ Includes 7 sections:
  - ▶ Adopts the Policy Statement
  - ▶ Commits to its implementation
  - ▶ Encourages local governments to utilize the 'NCTCOG Complete Streets Policy Statement Overview'



# Why Have A Policy?

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- ▶ To change practice, integrating the needs of all road users into *everyday* transportation planning and design practices.



# Why Have A Policy?

- ▶ To gradually create a complete network of roads that serve all users.



# Why Have A Policy?

To save money: in the long run, retrofit projects always cost more than getting it right the first time.

# Why Have A Policy?

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- ▶ To provide innovative transportation planners and engineers with the political and community support for doing things differently.
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# Results in Charlotte, NC

To date, Charlotte has transformed:

- 19 streets (8 more in the works)
- 11 intersections (10 pending)

# Results in Charlotte, NC

To date, Charlotte has added:

- 40 miles of new sidewalks
- 9 new or rebuilt complete streets (17 more on the way)

# Complete Streets Policies

As of April 2011, **over 200 communities** have committed to a complete streets approach.

# Next Steps

Draft Regional Policy	June - July 2011
<b>Present Draft to BPAC</b>	<b>August 17, 2011</b>
Comment Deadline	September 16, 2011
STTC Information	October 2011
RTC Information	November 2011
<b>BPAC Approval</b>	<b>November 16, 2011</b>
STTC Approval	November 2011/December 2011
RTC Approval	December 2011/January 2012



# Discussion

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- ▶ Are there items missing from the Complete Streets Policy Statement that should be included?
- ▶ Are there items that should be omitted?
- ▶ Is the Policy Statement too specific? Not specific enough?



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- ▶ Questions, comments, complaints, etc. should be emailed to Deb Humphreys at [dhumphreys@nctcog.org](mailto:dhumphreys@nctcog.org) or mailed to:

Deb Humphreys  
616 Six Flags Dr.  
Arlington, TX 76011

- ▶ Comments will be accepted through September 16, 2011



# Questions

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“I can’t understand why people are frightened of new ideas. I’m frightened of the old ones.”

- John Cage



# Contact Information

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NCTCOG Bicycle and Pedestrian Homepage:

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