



May 11, 2021

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SUBJECT: Project Delivery Memo # 21-01 – Pedestrian Accommodation in Alteration and Pavement Preservation Projects

This memo supersedes Project Delivery Memo 15-03 (Revised) dated October 27, 2015, and again revised on December 5, 2016.

Purpose and Direction

The purpose of this Project Delivery Memo (PDM) is to provide Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) guidance necessary to plan, scope, and design pedestrian network and accommodation in alteration and pavement preservation projects. This is not intended to affect activities conducted by Maintenance. This PDM supplements existing WSDOT ADA requirements to establish a comprehensive strategy to increase the agency's effectiveness in preserving and enhancing pedestrian safety and mobility.

WSDOT's commitment towards ensuring tangible and meaningful access for persons with disabilities is programmatically planned in the ADA Transition Plan. The ADA Transition Plan specifies the schedule for taking the steps necessary to achieve compliance with the ADA, identifies the methods by which physical or structural changes will be made in order to comply with the nondiscrimination policies described in Title II of the ADA, and identifies actions that will be taken during each year.

Projects Affected

This policy is to be followed on all alteration projects as defined in Design Manual 1510 and other pavement preservations projects, including BST, within WSDOT jurisdiction. Refer to the *ADA Improvement Jurisdiction Matrix* on the ADA Guidance webpage for additional ADA commitments (<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Design/ADAGuidance.htm>).

Background

ADA Requirements

As established in the Design Manual, it is WSDOT policy to provide appropriate pedestrian facilities, for all users, along and across sections of state routes as an integral part of the transportation system. Effective multimodal transportation systems remove the barriers to the pedestrian network while providing strategic ADA accessible pedestrian facilities. Those pedestrian facilities are required to meet ADA guidelines such that the destinations they are supporting are accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities. ADA guidelines and design criteria are established in Design Manual 1510.

FHWA approval of WSDOT's ADA Transition Plan is contingent upon successful implementation of WSDOT's self-assessment data collection procedures, including those for curb ramps and accessibility obstructions along existing sidewalks within project limits. Refer to the ADA Guidance webpage for directions for collecting and transmitting data to the WSDOT ADA Data Steward, as well as applicable special provisions (<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Design/ADAGuidance.htm>). These procedures must be followed in order to meet the commitments of WSDOT's ADA Transition Plan.

The public agency that is sponsoring the project is responsible for ensuring that ADA compliance is addressed on its project, regardless of which public agency has jurisdiction within the right of way. However, early coordination is recommended to understand pedestrian networks and local agency plans and projects that may affect the location or adjacent pedestrian network. Early coordination provides an opportunity to collaborate and partner on enhancements not specifically required by ADA policy that improve mobility for all.

Direction

Pedestrian Network Preservation or Completion

The establishment of comprehensive, integrated, and connected walking and bicycling networks is an important component for livable communities and transportation demand management and is an integral component of WSDOT's mission and values in creating an effective multimodal system.

In alteration projects, consider the existing pedestrian network, the existing infrastructure intended for pedestrian use, and potential gaps in desired routes when evaluating crossings. The influence of a nearby crossing on a decision to provide or enhance access is dependent on the intersection geometry, spacing between intersections, pedestrian network, and demand for crossing based on factors such as land use, transit stop locations, etc. Engagement with the community of persons with disabilities, local agencies, and other members of the public may be needed to understand pedestrian use, the local pedestrian network, and land use.

Identifying the pedestrian network and desired paths may allow for consolidating crossings as a reasonable approach for pedestrian mobility. Crossing consolidation should be rare and evaluated based on factors such as the operational context of the roadway, surrounding land use, and reasonable proximity of adjacent crossings. If consolidating crossings is the preferred approach, then the path between crossings needs to be reasonable and accessible from a pedestrian perspective. Accessibility criteria are defined in Design Manual 1510, and include design elements like clear width, cross slopes, surface texture, etc. Sidewalk obstructions, such as sidewalk panel heaving or landscape encroachments, should be identified and evaluated for inclusion in a project during the scoping phase.

For locations where a local agency is responsible for on-going maintenance, operations, and safety, WSDOT needs concurrence from that agency for pedestrian network revisions and enhancements that will be owned by the local agency.

Pedestrian Crossing Accommodation and Enhancement

It is legal for pedestrians to cross a roadway anywhere except between adjacent signalized intersections, or where otherwise prohibited. Crosswalks exist at all intersections, whether marked or not. Providing or maintaining existing access at intersections is consistent with state and federal laws, as well as WSDOT's multimodal mission. Providing access allows pedestrians to make their own determination of crossing acceptability, as the tolerance for factors such as traffic speed, traffic volume, crossing distances, etc., varies significantly for pedestrians. The appropriate treatment of a crossing is unique and should be made based on the specific context of each location.

The selection of any crossing enhancements, including pavement markings, signs, or other features should be identified and evaluated for inclusion in a project during the scoping phase and requires input and concurrence of the Region Traffic Engineer or designee. Resources and evaluation tools available include the active transportation network analysis conducted for the 2020 Active Transportation Plan and *Enhancement Criteria for Uncontrolled Pedestrian Crossing Locations*.

Open but not Accessible Crossings

Uncontrolled/unimproved crossings that do not have linkage to known pedestrian attractions or generators or are determined to not be necessary for the pedestrian network may remain unimproved with approval. These crossings that are intentionally not improved nor made fully accessible, do not need to be formally closed. Existing curb ramps that are not accessible for these crossings should be removed as long as an accessible path is provided as part of the pedestrian network. The adjacent curb ramps to serve pedestrian mobility for travel along the state highway should be designed to indicate the intended, directional pedestrian use.

This option may not be used at signalized intersections. The decision to provide an open but non-accessible crossing requires Region Traffic Engineer approval and concurrence of HQ Office of Equal Opportunity. The approved document will reside in the Design Documentation Package.

Closing Crossings

Closing crossings is not a preferred outcome and the formal closing of crossings has been and should remain infrequent for any given project. The decision to close a crossing is made independent of required ADA improvements or other content of this directive.

RCW 46.61.240 contains language on signing a closed crossing, however, non-visual indicators are needed as wayfinding cues to non-visual users. Additional treatment, such as directional curb ramps or other design elements, are recommended as a best practice because they naturally channel pedestrians to the open crossings.

The attachment provides examples where a crossing may warrant being closed, as well as locations where an existing crossing may remain in place, but without ADA improvement.

Refer to the ADA Guidance (<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Design/ADAGuidance.htm>) for additional information. Please direct questions about this memo to the Director of the Traffic Operations Division at 360-705-7281, Director of Development Division at 360 705-7231, Director of Active Transportation at 206-716-1130, or Deputy Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity/ADA Compliance at 360-705-7097.

Actions Required

Traffic Operations Division

Support Regions and update the Traffic Manual to reflect this direction.

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Development Division

Support Regions and update the Design Manual and Development Services Manual to reflect this direction.

Office of Equal Opportunity

Support Regions and collaborate with the Traffic Operations Division on documenting the Open, but Not Accessible Crossing approval process.

Regions

Continue to implement ADA data collection procedures during scoping, design, and construction as specified within the ADA Guidance webpage. Implement other direction specified above in all scoping and Design projects. Projects under construction should consider this direction and incorporate as able.

RV:seo

Attachment: Crossing Examples

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Crossing Examples

Open but Not Accessible Crossings

Uncontrolled crossings that do not have linkage to known pedestrian attractions or generators, or are not necessary for the pedestrian network, do not need to be made accessible nor do they need to be formally closed. Existing curb ramps that are not accessible for these crossings should be removed as long as an accessible path is provided as part of the pedestrian network. This option may not be used at signalized intersections. The decision to provide an open but non-accessible crossing requires Region Traffic Engineer and HQ Office of Equal Opportunity concurrence.

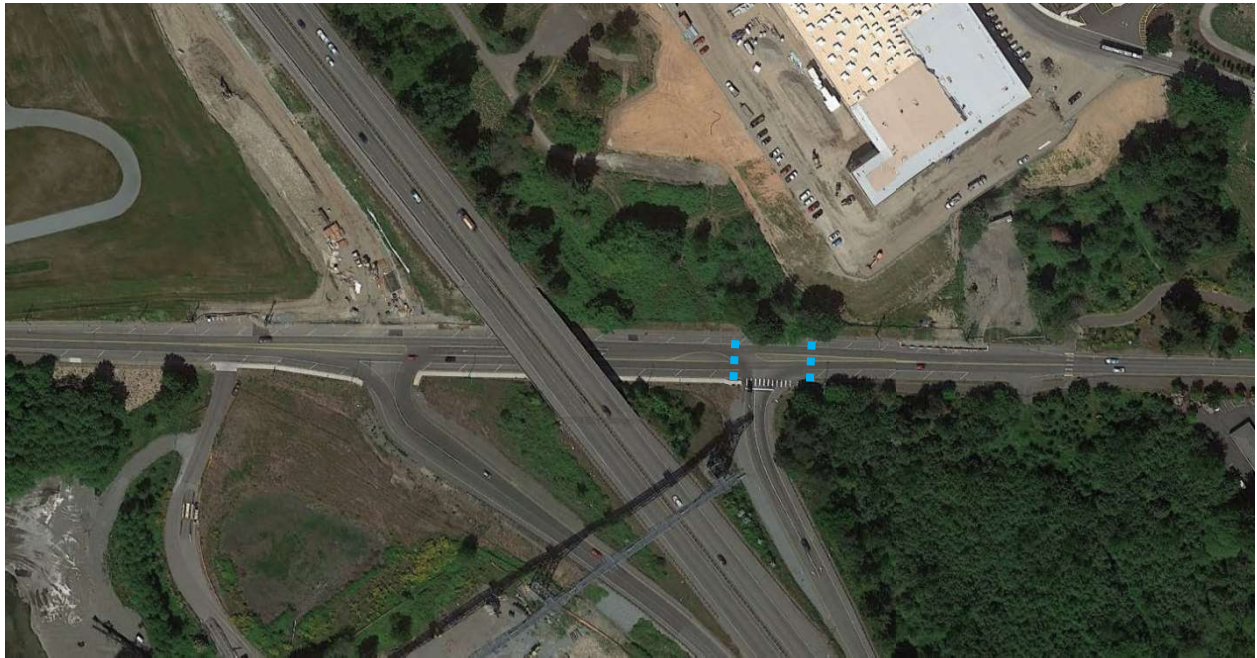
Example 1. Uncontrolled crossing with no known pedestrian attractions or generators

- Uncontrolled ramp terminal intersection
- No pedestrian generators or attractions on the north side of the facility



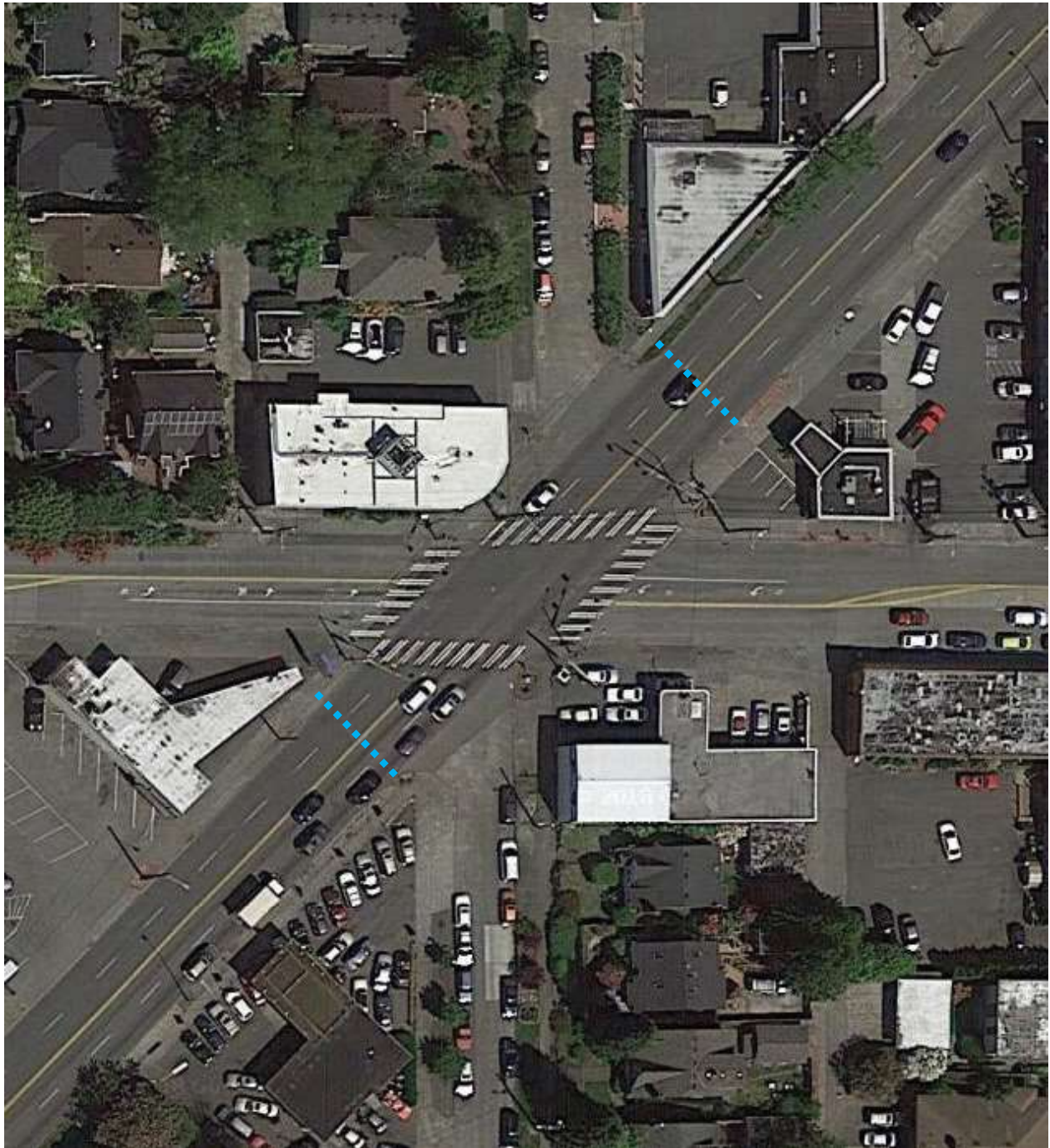
Example 2. Uncontrolled crossing with pedestrian facilities but no pedestrian attractions or generators

- Minor-street stop-controlled ramp terminal intersection
- Sidewalks on the north and south side, but land use does not attract or generate pedestrian traffic
- Marked crosswalk approximately 370 ft east of the intersection, along the pedestrian route and adjacent to the pedestrian destination



Example 3. Uncontrolled crossings adjacent to signalized intersection

- Minor-street stop-controlled intersections
- Sidewalks on both sides of state highway with land uses that support pedestrian traffic
- Marked and signal-controlled crosswalks within approximately 70 ft of the legal crossings



Closed Crossings

Formally closed crossings apply to all users. The decision to close a crossing requires approval of the Region Traffic Engineer and HQ Office of Equal Opportunity concurrence.

Example 4. Essential signal operations at a location that does not support the pedestrian crossing

- Signalized ramp terminal intersection
- No land use, origins, destinations, or transit stops that support a pedestrian crossing
- Closed crossing that would conflict with protected left-turn movement



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