



POLICIES AND STANDARDS MEMORANDUM

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To: Project Management Team
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Project: Curry County Transportation System Plan Update
Subject: Policies and Standards Memorandum (Task 8.1)

OVERVIEW

This memorandum outlines an approach for amending Curry County's regulations to incorporate the goals, objectives, and recommendations identified in the Curry County Transportation System Plan (TSP) update. Regulatory provisions identified in this memorandum pertain to the Curry County Comprehensive Plan. Regulatory provisions pertaining to the Curry County Zoning Ordinance (CCZO) and Land Division Ordinance – or “code” – are addressed in a companion memorandum for Task 8.2.

The TSP update will comprehensively update the County's current TSP, adopted in 2005. The updated TSP establishes the County's goals and objectives for developing and improving the transportation system through the year 2042. It focuses on transportation-related issues for unincorporated areas within the county.

This memorandum includes a summary regarding amendments to pertinent Curry County regulatory documents and recommended policy language. Specific proposed policy language is presented in Attachment A. The policy language draws heavily on goals and objectives agreed on early in this planning process. This memorandum also discusses other policy and standards matters raised in the project scope and as part of recent technical memoranda. A brief look at next steps closes this memorandum.

POLICY AMENDMENTS SUMMARY

The County will need to amend its land use regulations to implement updated transportation policies and standards and to implement the TSP's goals and objectives. The consultant team evaluated existing policies and standards in the County's Comprehensive Plan and land development ordinances to ensure that they reflect TSP recommendations and are consistent with statewide requirements, namely those in the Oregon Transportation Planning Rule (Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR) 660, Division 12, or “TPR”). (Note: Land development ordinances and TPR compliance are the focus of the Implementing Ordinances and Code Changes Memorandum.)

Based on that evaluation, the following regulatory documents are recommended for amendments.

- Curry County Comprehensive Plan (Chapter 12 – Transportation): Strategically update policies and objectives in the Comprehensive Plan to be consistent with the TSP project goals and objectives.
 - Replace Sections 12.2 (Transportation Element), 12.3 (Mass Transit), 12.4 (Air Transportation), 12.5 (Waterborne Transportation), 12.6 (Other Forms of Transportation), and 12.7 (Regional Needs) with reference to the 2024 TSP and the 2023 Transit Development Plan (TDP).
 - Replace Section 12.8 (Plan Policies for Transportation) with policies proposed in Attachment A.
- Curry County Transportation System Plan: Adopt the 2024 TSP by reference as the transportation element of the adopted Comprehensive Plan, replacing the currently adopted 2005 plan.
- Curry County Land Development Ordinances: CCZO and Land Division Ordinance amendments are addressed in the companion Implementing Ordinances and Code Changes Memorandum; amend the ordinances to be consistent with and implement the direction provided in the updated Comprehensive Plan, TSP, and the TPR.

Comprehensive Plan

In order to ensure policy consistency, the Curry County Comprehensive Plan transportation policies should be updated to reflect the updated TSP's goals, objectives, and recommendations. The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments incorporate the updated direction provided by the project goals and objectives in Technical Memorandum #1 (Goals, Objectives, and Evaluation Criteria). TSP goals and objectives guide the evaluation and prioritization of transportation improvements in the updated TSP, as well as the new policies that reflect the recommendations of this planning process.

The goals and objectives in Technical Memorandum #1 carried forward themes from the County's 2005 TSP goals and objectives as well as currently adopted Comprehensive Plan transportation goals and policies. They also reflect this TSP update project's purpose and needs, as established in the project scope and expressed by Project Management Team (PMT) members in early project meetings. Policy language that is generally reflective of Southwestern Oregon, and specifically the conditions in Curry County, help round out the proposed goals and objectives to ensure they speak to the range of issues that Oregon counties face today and that State regulations require them to address. Attachment A to this memorandum presents the policy language crafted from the TSP goals and objectives; this policy language is recommended as amendments to the County's Comprehensive Plan Chapter 12, Transportation.

Transportation System Plan

The Curry County TSP establishes the County's goals and objectives for developing and improving the transportation system. It includes transportation-related issues for unincorporated areas of the County. The TSP is an adopted element of the Comprehensive Plan.

It is recommended that the County adopt the updated TSP as a replacement to the TSP that was adopted in 2005. By legislatively adopting the "plan" elements of the TSP, the County will have a policy framework on which to base compliance-related development requirements and to seek public financing for recommended improvements. The TSP will be adopted by reference as the Transportation element of the County's Comprehensive Plan.

DISCUSSION OF OTHER POLICIES AND STANDARDS

Other topics that the scope and Technical Memorandum #7 (Preferred Alternative) raise include: jurisdictional transfer; coordinated transportation and land use decision making; access management; and transportation facility design standards. These topics are discussed, in turn, below.

Jurisdictional Transfer

There may be cases where cities in Curry County would transfer jurisdiction of a local roadway to the County or the County may agree to improving (paving) a County roadway within city limits. Sample policy language is provided below for the County to review and select from based on what language is most useful for current and future needs. This language is not currently reflected in the proposed policy language in Attachment A given direction that is needed from the County.

A. The County will pursue jurisdictional road transfers that improve jurisdictional allocation of facility management responsibilities. Roads accepted by Curry County in jurisdictional transfers should be paved rural roads for which the County has special maintenance expertise. The County should take all appropriate legal opportunities to negotiate jurisdictional transfer of County roads within urban growth boundaries and city limits.

B. Unless a project is needed to address hazards or immediate safety needs, the County will only improve County roads within city limits if the project is part of a jurisdictional transfer agreement, or if the City or a third party agrees to cover at least half of the project cost and County funds are available to cover the remaining cost.

C. The County will pave an unpaved (gravel) local road or accept maintenance of an unimproved County road only if another party pays the full cost of improving the road to County paved local road standards. The exception is unimproved County roadways that function as an approach to a state highway, which are not eligible to be paved using state funds.

D. The County will not allocate capital improvement funds to improve local roads with the exception of roads that are part of, or provide connections to, a designated pedestrian or bicycle system.

Coordinated Decision Making

Proposed policy language (Policy 5.3) in Attachment A addresses this topic at a high level. Given that the TPR requires coordinated land use and transportation decision making, this topic is addressed in a more detailed manner in the Implementing Ordinances and Code Changes Memorandum, which addresses TPR consistency.

Access Management

Proposed policy language (Policy 1.3) in Attachment A addresses access management at a high level, including requiring adherence to – or movement in the direction of – County and State access spacing standards. Specific access management measures are addressed below, in Attachment B, and in the Implementing Ordinances and Code Changes Memorandum.

Access Spacing Variances

Existing code (CCZO Section 4.050.9, Table 9A) establishes minimum intersection spacing. CCZO Section 4.050.21 establishes criteria for variances to access management standards for “unique or special conditions that make strict application of the provisions impractical.”¹ If the County finds those variance criteria to have worked sufficiently to date, no amendments are recommended.

Access Consolidation

Existing code (CCZO Section 4.050.19) addresses shared access as part of proposed subdivision of land on a state highway. It provides guidance but is ambiguous regarding what is specifically required and under what circumstances.

Subdivisions with frontage on the state highway system shall be designed into shared access points to and from the highway. Normally a maximum of two accesses shall be allowed regardless of the number of lots served. If access off a secondary road is possible, then access should not be allowed onto the state highway. If access off of a secondary road becomes available, then conversion to that access is encouraged and the access to the state highway will be closed.

The guidance provided in the access management document (Attachment B) addresses access consolidation. This guidance includes the following:

- Providing access only to the lower-classification roadway when multiple roadways abut the site.
- Providing crossover easements on all compatible parcels (considering topography, access, land use, and existing development) to facilitate future access between adjoining parcels and joint/shared access (driveways) as part of land use actions where access spacing standards are not met.
- Issuing conditional access permits to developments having proposed access points that do not meet the designated access spacing policy and/or can align with opposing driveways.
- Dedicating right-of-way to facilitate the future planned roadway system along the frontages of proposed developments.
- Making half-street improvements (e.g., sidewalks, curb and gutter, sidepaths, paved shoulders, and/or travel lanes) along site frontages that do not have improvements in place at the time of development.

This guidance, which is focused on development along highways, can be codified and also improve safety and mobility along arterials and collectors in the county, where there is currently substandard access spacing and alignment. See the Implementing Ordinances and Code Changes Memorandum for existing and proposed code language that implements this guidance.

¹ The County does not have authority over variances to spacing standards on state highways. The requirements for those variances – or deviations, as the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) refers to them – are established in OAR 734-051-3050.

Transportation Design Standards

Currently adopted code includes functional classification references to Comprehensive Plan Table 12.2A and 2005 TSP Appendix B and establishes basic design standards for urban and rural settings in the county. (See CCZO Sections 4.050.5-4.050.8 and Tables 6A-6C and 8A. Note that Land Division Ordinance Section 6.0210 refers to CCZO Section 4.050 for design standards.)

The Implementing Ordinances and Code Changes Memorandum presents specific code amendment language related to functional classification references and rural roadway design standards. This is strictly a code-related issue and related policy language is not proposed in Attachment A.

NEXT STEPS

The PMT and Technical Advisory Meeting (TAC) have reviewed this memo and MIG has revised it based on their comments. MIG will assist Kittelson & Associates (KAI) with incorporation of this material into the Draft TSP. MIG will then assist KAI with presenting the material jointly to the Curry County Board of Commissioners and Planning Commission at a work session currently scheduled for March 2024.

ATTACHMENT A – PROPOSED POLICIES/ COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS

Goal 1: Safety and Resiliency

Provide a transportation system that is safe for all transportation modes and people of all ages and abilities, and that supports community recovery and resiliency post-disaster.

Policies

- 1.1 Prioritize implementation of projects, programs, and policies that seek to reduce crash frequency and severity, with a focus on improving hot spots and systemic safety issues.
- 1.2 Support integration of safety improvements into maintenance and other projects.
- 1.3 Require access management measures – such as adhering to or moving in the direction of County access spacing standards, supporting state highway access management standards, and implementing consolidation strategies and improvement projects (including those that define or restrict turning movements to and from sites) – on the County's arterial and collector system to increase safety, particularly between different modes using the transportation system.
- 1.4 Implement plans for alternate routes to US 101 to aid in response to and recovery from natural disasters (e.g., fires, earthquakes, landslides, and tsunamis) and in coordination with other agencies, such as local emergency service providers and the US Forest Service.
- 1.4 Advance the development and maintenance of safe locations, outside tsunami zones, for County transportation support facilities such as road department fleet and maintenance yards.

Goal 2: Sustainability and Responsibility

Create a fiscally responsible and sustainable transportation system, minimizing environmental and resource impacts.

Policies

- 2.1 Focus on transportation demand management (e.g., pedestrian and bicycle improvements) and transportation system management as cost-effective and less polluting ways to improve and maximize the County's transportation system and traveler choice.
- 2.2 Avoid impacts to the scenic, natural, and cultural resources in Curry County and, where practical, implement transportation projects that showcase these resources in a respectful way.
- 2.3 As needed, consider alternative transportation facility designs to avoid impacts to natural resources.
- 2.4 Minimize environmental impacts (e.g., air, land, water, noise, and visual pollution), and seek a balance between transportation modes by supporting less polluting transportation options.

Goal 3: Efficiency and Vitality

Provide a transportation system that fosters a vibrant economy and community through the efficient movement of goods and people and facilitates easy access to economic and recreational opportunities.

Policies

- 3.1 Improve local road and multimodal networks to reduce reliance and congestion on US 101.
- 3.2 Implement transportation system management (e.g., traffic signal timing, turn lanes) as a cost-effective way to reduce congestion on US 101.
- 3.3 Consider freight (trucking) needs in transportation improvements, particularly in access to ports and airports.
- 3.4 Implement transportation system recommendations in coordination with and in support of improvements planned for airports and related facilities.
- 3.5 Identify key recreation destinations and ways to improve access to these areas in order to grow recreation-based tourism in the county.
- 3.6 Support multimodal access to recreation, including through implementing recommendations from the Oregon Coast Bike Route Plan.

Goal 4: Transportation Options and Equity

Improve conditions and access for affordable transportation options – including walking, biking and other “rolling,” taking transit, and ridesharing – and minimize potential negative impacts of transportation projects on communities or groups.

Policies

- 4.1 Include accessibility and ADA-compliant elements in transportation project design and implementation.
- 4.2 Avoid negative impacts and prioritize benefits of transportation projects on groups defined by the state and federal government as “protected” (e.g., people in poverty, seniors, people with disabilities, and minority residents).
- 4.3 Design transportation improvements to safely and efficiently accommodate multiple transportation modes, where practical, within public right-of-way.
- 4.4 Continue to plan for and implement a safe, attractive, efficient, and accessible system of bicycle and pedestrian improvements, including and consistent with recommendations from the Oregon Coast Bike Route Plan.
- 4.5 Promote the use of active transportation by both residents and visitors by continually maintaining and improving facilities and connecting bicyclists and pedestrians with key destinations.
- 4.6 Support safer multimodal transportation and improved local networks as a way to reduce reliance and congestion on US 101.

Goal 5: Coordination and Collaboration

Coordinate transportation projects and related land use and development policies with appropriate partner agencies and plans.

Policies

- 5.1 In addition to internal County departmental coordination, collaborate with other agencies such as Curry Public Transit, local emergency service providers, and US Forest Service to establish emergency and post-disaster transportation routes and services.
- 5.2 Ensure that local land use and development requirements reflect and realize recommendations from adopted TSP.
- 5.3 Ensure coordination between land use and transportation decisions, including through codified transportation impact analysis and required interdepartmental notification and review of land use applications.

ATTACHMENT B – ACCESS MANAGEMENT AND SPACING

ACCESS MANAGEMENT AND SPACING

The term “access management” is commonly used to describe the practice of managing the number, placement, and movements of intersections and driveways that provide access to adjacent land uses. Access management policies can be an important tool to improve transportation system efficiency by limiting the number of opportunities for turning movements on to or off of certain streets. In addition, well deployed access management strategies can help manage travel demand by improving travel conditions for pedestrians and bicycles. Eliminating the number of access points on roadways allows for continuous sidewalk and bicycle facilities and reduces the number of potential interruptions and conflict points between pedestrians, bicyclists, and cars. Access management is typically adopted as a policy in development guidelines. It can be extremely difficult to implement an access management program once properties have been developed along a corridor. Cooperation among and involvement of relevant government agencies, business owners, land developers, and the public is necessary to establish an access management plan that benefits all roadway users and businesses.

Access Management Alternatives

The TSP should identify access management techniques and strategies that help to preserve transportation system investments and guard against deteriorations in safety and increased congestion. The County's approach to access management should balance the need for land use activities and parcels to be served with appropriate access, while preserving safe and efficient movement of traffic. Access management alternatives include:

- Using a variance process for County roads and a deviation process for ODOT roads for when the access spacing standard cannot be met; and
- Establishing an approach for access consolidation over time to move in the direction of the standards at each opportunity.

Access Spacing Variances and Deviations

Access spacing variances may be provided to parcels whose highway/street frontage, topography, or location would otherwise preclude issuance of a conforming permit and would either have no reasonable access or cannot obtain reasonable alternate access to the public road system. In such a situation, ODOT or the County may issue a conditional access permit, as appropriate, for a connection to a property that cannot be accessed in a manner that is consistent with the spacing standards. The permit can carry a condition that the access may be closed at such time that reasonable access becomes available to a local public street. The approval condition might also require a given landowner to work in cooperation with adjacent landowners to provide either joint access points, front and rear cross-over easements, or a rear access upon future redevelopment.

The requirements for obtaining a deviation from ODOT's minimum spacing standards are documented in OAR 734-051-3050. For streets under the County's jurisdiction, the County may reduce the access spacing standards at the discretion of the County if the following conditions exist:

- Joint access driveways and cross access easements are provided consistent with the standards;
- The site plan incorporates a unified access and circulation system consistent with the standards;
- The property owner enters into an agreement with the County that pre-existing connections on the site will be closed and eliminated after construction of each side of the joint use driveway; and/or,
- The proposed access plan for redevelopment properties moves in the direction of the standards.

The County may modify or waive the access spacing standards for streets under the County's jurisdiction where the physical site characteristics or layout of abutting properties would make development of a unified or shared access and circulation system impractical, subject to the following considerations:

- Unless modified, application of the access standard will result in the degradation of operational and safety integrity of the transportation system.
- The granting of the variance shall meet the purpose and intent of these standards and shall not be considered until every feasible option for meeting access standards is explored.
- Applicants for variance from these standards must provide proof of unique or special conditions that make strict application of the standards impractical. Applicants shall include proof that:
 - Indirect or restricted access cannot be obtained;
 - No engineering or construction solutions can be applied to mitigate the condition; and,
 - No alternative access is available from a road with a lower functional classification than the primary roadway.

No variance shall be granted where such hardship is self-created. Consistency between access spacing requirements and exceptions in the TSP and the code is an important regulatory solution to be addressed as part of this TSP update.

Access Consolidation

From an operational perspective, access management measures limit the number of redundant access points along roadways. This enhances roadway capacity, improves safety, and benefits circulation. Enforcement of the access spacing standards should be complemented with provision of alternative access points. Purchasing right-of-way and closing driveways without a parallel road system and/or other local access could seriously affect the viability of the impacted properties. Thus, if an access management approach is taken, alternative access should be developed to avoid "land-locking" a given property.

As part of every land use action, the County should evaluate the potential need for conditioning a given development proposal with the following items in order to maintain and/or improve traffic operations and safety along the arterial and collector roadways.

- Providing access only to the lower-classification roadway when multiple roadways abut the site.
- Provision of crossover easements on all compatible parcels (considering topography, access, and land use) to facilitate future access between adjoining parcels and joint/shared access (driveways) as part of land use actions where access spacing standards are not met.
- Issuance of conditional access permits to developments having proposed access points that do not meet the designated access spacing policy and/or can align with opposing driveways.
- Right-of-way dedications to facilitate the future planned roadway system in the vicinity of proposed developments.
- Half-street improvements (sidewalks, curb and gutter, bike lanes/paths, and/or travel lanes) along site frontages that do not have full build-out improvements in place at the time of development.

Exhibit B-1 illustrates the application of cross-over easements and conditional access permits over time to achieve access management objectives. The individual steps are described in Table B-1. As illustrated in the exhibit and supporting table, by using these guidelines, all driveways along the highways/streets can eventually move in the overall direction of the access spacing standards as development and redevelopment occur.

Table B-1: Example of Crossover Easement/Indenture/Consolidation

Step	Process
1	EXISTING – Currently Lots A, B, C, and D have site-access driveways that neither meet the access spacing criteria of 500 feet nor align with driveways or access points on the opposite side of the highway. Under these conditions motorists are in situations of potential conflict (conflicting left turns) with opposing traffic. Additionally, the number of side-street (or site-access driveway) intersections decreases the operation and safety of the highway
2	REDEVELOPMENT OF LOT B – At the time that Lot B redevelops, the County would review the proposed site plan and make recommendations to ensure that the site could promote future crossover or consolidated access. Next, the County would issue conditional permits for the development to provide crossover easements with Lots A and C, and ODOT/County would grant a conditional access permit to the lot. After evaluating the land use action, ODOT/County would determine that LOT B does not have either alternative access, nor can an access point be aligned with an opposing access point, nor can the available lot frontage provide an access point that meets the access spacing criteria set forth for segment of highway.
3	REDEVELOPMENT OF LOT A – At the time Lot A redevelops, the ODOT/County would undertake the same review process as with the redevelopment of LOT B (see Step 2); however, under this scenario ODOT and the County would use the previously obtained cross-over easement at Lot B consolidate the access points of Lots A and B. ODOT/County would then relocate the conditional access of Lot B to align with the opposing access point and provide an efficient access to both Lots A and B. The consolidation of site-access driveways for Lots A and B will not only reduce the number of driveways accessing the highway, but will also eliminate the conflicting left-turn movements the highway by the alignment with the opposing access point.
4	REDEVELOPMENT OF LOT D – The redevelopment of Lot D will be handled in same manner as the redevelopment of Lot B (see Step 2)

Step	Process
5	REDEVELOPMENT OF LOT C – The redevelopment of Lot C will be reviewed once again to ensure that the site will accommodate crossover and/or consolidated access. Using the crossover agreements with Lots B and D, Lot C would share a consolidated access point with Lot D and will also have alternative frontage access via the shared site-access driveway of Lots A and B. By using the crossover agreement and conditional access permit process, the ODOT/County will be able to eliminate another access point and provide the alignment with the opposing access points.
6	COMPLETE – After Lots A, B, C, and D redevelop over time, the number of access points will be reduced and aligned, and the remaining access points will meet the access spacing standard.

Exhibit B-1: Cross Over Easement

