

# APPENDIX FF – Complete Streets Decision Documentation

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## ARTICLE 1 Introduction

This appendix provides guidance for documenting decisions about selection of complete streets facilities. This guidance should be used with the policies and essential procedures included in Chapters 6, 9 and 12.

The outline presented in this appendix is used to collect and organize information from various sources that will assist with preparing the complete streets portion of the project scope.

The complete streets decision document (CSDD) must be completed for all projects that require a PID as described in the February 11, 2021 memorandum, [Complete Streets Decision Document – Implementation](#), except for permanent restoration (131) and safety (010) projects, and projects-funded-by-others (local agency funded projects). If a project was programmed before the date of implementation of the CSDD, a CSDD is not required for any subsequent project phase.

If a CSDD was prepared for a project at the PID phase, and there are no changes to the complete streets facilities during the PA&ED and PS&E phase, a revalidated CSDD must be prepared during the PA&ED and PS&E phases. If at any time there are changes to the complete streets facilities identified in the current CSDD, a superseding CSDD must be prepared. See Article 3, Essential Procedures, and Article 4, Template for more information.

All completed original, revalidated, and superseding CSDD documents must be submitted by email to Headquarters Division of Design at [CSDD@dot.ca.gov](mailto:CSDD@dot.ca.gov).

Although a project may be exempt from complete streets facilities evaluation, the project team is encouraged to consider the impacts that any project may have on non-motorized users if there is a reasonable opportunity to include, improve or accommodate facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians.

## ARTICLE 2 Outline

### General

The CSDD template is editable to customize project specific responses to the questions. The format is a questionnaire that documents the steps taken to determine bicycle, pedestrian, or transit needs, identify preferred complete streets facilities, identify complete streets facilities selected for the project, and the rationale supporting those decisions. The individual preparing the CSDD should begin with the questionnaire template provided. Responses to all questions in the template are required in the completed CSDD.

### Document Questions

#### Question 1:

This question asks if the project location is a facility where bicyclists and pedestrians are legally prohibited. If the response is “YES”, the preparer will stop here and not complete the remaining questions of the CSDD. The CSDD is then signed by the preparer and concurrence individuals before attaching it to the PID. If the response is “NO”, this indicates the possibility that nonmotorized users may be present on the facility, and the preparer proceeds to the next question.

State highway facilities are open for use by bicyclists and pedestrians unless they are prohibited by State statute, local ordinance, or communicated through signs or markings. Locations where bicyclists and pedestrians have been prohibited include some freeways, ramps along prohibited freeways, some bridges and structures, or portions of a roadway where bicyclists or pedestrians have been prohibited and directed to another parallel route such as an adjacent path or walkway.

It is important to remember that right shoulders are legally open to bicyclists and pedestrians on most roadways, even in the absence of dedicated facilities such as bike lanes or sidewalks. In these cases, it is expected that consideration of impacts to nonmotorized users will be made with every project. It is also important to recognize that some facilities may intersect or impact an adjacent facility where bicyclists and pedestrians are allowed, such as ramp

terminal intersections and local (minor) roads crossing over or under the State highway that should be evaluated in the CSDD.

Question 2:

Some projects are initiated with a specific constrained scope. In some cases, the nature of work is a type that is outside of the roadbed and void of the potential of affecting nonmotorized travel modes, either currently or in the planned future of the facility.

For example, scour repair of a bridge over a river includes work to the footing and not the bridge deck or roadway portions. In this case, it would be outside the scope of the project to consider modifications to the roadway. Another example is a project that proposes to modify the outfall of culverts that are outside the potential roadbed footprint of a current or planned facility.

It is important to consider the potential impact of all projects proposed for the location. For example, if there is a plan to widen a roadway in the future to accommodate bicyclists or pedestrians where a sound wall or retaining wall is to be constructed, the structure should be located so as not interfere with the planned future widening.

If the response to Question 2 is “YES”, this means that there will be no impact to current or future planned facilities with the project, and the preparer will stop here and not complete the remaining questions of the CSDD. The CSDD is then signed by the preparer and concurrence individuals before attaching it to the PID. However, the project team is reminded that complete streets facilities may be considered for inclusion into a project, even if further complete streets evaluation is not required. If the response is “NO,” this indicates a potential impact to nonmotorized users, and the preparer proceeds to the next question.

Question 3:

Most projects that require a PID will also require preparation of a transportation planning scoping information sheet (TPSIS). The TPSIS is structured to identify any planning documents or similar resources that were consulted when defining the scope of a project. If the response to Question 3 is “YES”, this means that a TPSIS has been prepared for the project and attached to the PID, and the preparer will skip to Question 5. If the response is “NO”, this indicates

a TPSIS was not prepared for the project, and the preparer proceeds to the next question.

#### Question 4:

When developing the scope of a project, all relevant planning documents should be consulted to verify consistency with the current and planned use of the facility. When identifying project needs for bicycle, pedestrian, or transit specifically, all available Caltrans, local, regional, or tribal plans should be reviewed. Not all documents will be available, such as district active transportation plans or local agency bicycle master plans. In the absence of these important planning documents, the preparer should consult with district or local agency planning staff.

Not all potential sources of planning-type documents are listed. Use response “e. Other” to list all other planning documents that were consulted and proceed to the next question.

#### Question 5:

The purpose of this question is to identify any bicycle, pedestrian or transit needs within the project location. This determination is made by consulting the planning documents identified in Question 4, or the TPSIS if one was prepared, and any other resources such as local agency and stakeholder outreach, project development team discussion, geometric design feasibility evaluation, or any other resource for identification of the deficiencies or opportunities for improvement for the project location.

A “NO” response to this question indicates there is no additional need for bicycle or pedestrian improvements. For example, a project located on a roadway identified as needing dedicated bicycle and pedestrian facilities where in fact the existing facility currently has Class II bike lanes and standard sidewalks has no need for improved or additional new facilities. Another example may be a rural location with little to no bicycle and pedestrian demand, where in fact the existing roadway has standard eight-foot shoulders. In this case, the review of planning documentation would identify no additional planned or needed nonmotorized facilities. A brief explanation should be provided after the “NO” response, and the preparer will stop here and not

complete the remaining questions of the CSDD. The CSDD is then signed by the preparer and concurrence individuals before attaching it to the PID.

If the location-specific needs analysis has identified new or improved nonmotorized facilities, check the “YES” response and describe those needs and proceed to the next question. Note that Question 5 identifies only the need or deficiency, not the recommended or proposed solution. That step will be covered by subsequent questions. For example, the need may be to close a gap in an existing bikeway, but do not state here that a bike lane should be constructed.

### Question 6:

The purpose of this question is to list the preferred facilities that have been identified to address the needs stated in Question 5. For example, if there is a gap in an existing bike route that should be closed, there should be an evaluation to identify the preferred facility that would close that gap. Using the guidance and planning resources available as described in the next paragraph, and not considering any potential constraints at this time, select the preferred facility for the location. For example, if the location has Class IV separated bikeway facilities before and after the project location, it may be determined that a gap closure with a similar Class IV bikeway would be the likely alternative. The preparer should not assume any project constraints that would prevent the inclusion of the preferred facility as that will be addressed in subsequent questions and during revalidation after PA&ED and PS&E when more information is known.

The preparer is encouraged to consult as many relevant sources as necessary to make the determination of the preferred facility. Sources may include but are not limited to:

- [\*Complete Streets Elements Toolbox\*](#)
- [\*Contextual Guidance for Bike Facilities Memo, dated March 11, 2020\*](#)
- [\*Bikeway Facility Selection Guidance Memo, dated June 30, 2020\*](#)
- [\*FHWA Bikeway Facility Selection Guide\*](#)
- [\*Highway Design Manual\*](#)
- [\*Design Information Bulletin 89, Class IV Bikeway Guidance \(Separated Bikeways/Cycle Tracks\)\*](#)

- [\*Design Information Bulletin 94, Complete Streets Contextual Design Guidance\*](#)
- [\*AASHTO Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Design Guides\*](#)

List the facility types and quantities in the table provided. The item unit should correlate to the units provided in the asset management tool, if applicable. Provide a rough estimated cost, including all right of way and support costs and proceed to the next question. The estimated cost will not be used for programming the project, but rather for context and comparison purposes only.

#### Question 7:

In some cases, there may be known opposition to the identified preferred complete streets facilities. If the project has any known public or stakeholder opposition, check the “YES” response and describe the source and form of opposition and proceed to the next question. Check “NO” if no opposition to the identified preferred complete streets facilities is known and proceed to the next question. This question is for informational purposes and does not affect the identification of preferred facilities.

#### Question 8:

The project team should make every attempt to include all identified preferred complete streets facilities listed in Question 6 into the programmed alternative identified in the PID. However, it is not always feasible to do so based on known project constraints. There may also be occasions where the programmed project alternative includes the preferred facilities at PID phase, but constraints are identified in PA&ED or PS&E that require alteration or removal of complete streets facilities.

If the programmed project scope includes all preferred facilities identified in Question 6, respond “YES” to this question and the preparer will stop here and not complete the remaining questions of the CSDD. The CSDD is then signed by the preparer and concurrence individuals before attaching it to the PID. However, if only a portion or none of the preferred alternatives are included, respond “NO” and proceed to the next question.

#### Question 9:

The purpose of this question is to capture any complete streets facilities that are to be included in the scope of the project, even if the scope of the



improvement is not equal to that of the preferred improvements described in Question 6. The complete streets facilities may be described as improvements that are of similar type and function as the preferred facilities, or improvements that may be considered incremental to the preferred facilities. For example, if the preferred facility is identified as a Class IV Separated Bikeway, yet the constrained right of way width does not allow construction of a Class IV facility, the selected facility may instead be a Class II Bike Lane. Respond “YES” to the question, list the facility type, quantity and rough estimated cost in the table and proceed to the next question. The remainder of the CSDD would be completed to document the rationale and justification for not including the preferred facilities in the project scope.

A “NO” response to this question indicates that there are no complete streets facilities included in the project even though needs and preferred facilities were identified. This response will require reasons and justification in response to Question 11 for not incorporating improvements to the mobility of nonmotorized users. The preparer will respond “NO” and proceed to the next question.

#### Question 10:

Sometimes a project will have specific funding requirements that preclude it from being combined with other funding sources. This is an uncommon scenario, but a possibility. Respond “YES” if the project has any constraints that limit the ability to combine funding sources for the inclusion of complete streets facilities, describe those constraints and proceed to the next question. Funding constraints alone do not provide sufficient justification for not including preferred complete streets facilities, so Question 11 must also be completed. Respond “NO” if the project funding does not affect the ability to incorporate additional complete streets elements into the project and proceed to the next question.

#### Question 11:

This question provides the reasoning, rationale, and justification for all complete street-related decisions made for the project. Some of the physical constraints may include constrained right of way, such as dense residential neighborhood, high-priced commercial structures, contaminated soil removal, etc. Geographic limitations such as steep terrain may also be restrictive. Environmental conditions such as protected species may also limit alternative

selection. The space provided for response may be expanded to allow as full of an explanation as necessary. The response to this question needs to be compelling and accurate. This is the response that will be provided whenever a question is raised as to why the full scope of preferred alternatives for nonmotorized facilities is not being included with the project.

Once the full rationale is provided, the preparer and concurrence individuals sign the CSDD before attaching it to the PID.

## **ARTICLE 3      Essential Procedures**

### **Original CSDD (PID Phase)**

Use the template to prepare the original CSDD during the project initiation phase. Modify the signature blocks as needed to represent the specific title and employer of each signer. The completed CSDD is an attachment to the PID. Additional guidance for the project initiation CSDD is available from Headquarters [\*Division of Transportation Planning, Office of Complete Streets\*](#).

#### Signatures

The individual who is in responsible charge of the PID, such as a district planner or project engineer, consultant, or other licensed professional, prepares and signs the original CSDD during the PID Phase.

Concurrence signatures are required by:

- District complete streets coordinator, typically an individual employed in the district Division of Planning.
- Deputy District Director for Planning.
- Deputy District Director for Design or Region Division Chief of Project Development.
- District Director

### **Revalidation of CSDD (PA&ED Phase, PS&E Phase)**

At the completion of PA&ED and PS&E, the CSDD will be reviewed for revalidation that there has been no change to the complete streets facilities originally scoped for the project. If there have been no changes, only the project engineer will sign a revalidated CSDD to certify that there are no changes. For PA&ED, the revalidated CSDD should be completed before the

start of PS&E. For PA&ED phase, the revalidated CSDD is an attachment to the project approval document. For PS&E phase, the revalidated CSDD should be completed before the district ready-to-list date. At completion of PS&E, place the revalidated CSDD in the permanent project history file.

### **Superseding CSDD (PA&ED Phase, PS&E Phase)**

If at any time during PA&ED or PS&E the complete streets elements have changed since the original CSDD was completed, a superseding CSDD must be prepared. Use the template and respond to the same questions as the original CSDD, including the list of included complete streets elements and rationale for the change. A superseding CSDD should be proposed and circulated as early as possible to facilitate review and resolution of comments and reduce the risk of delay.

#### Headquarters Division of Design Review

The district is required to send the proposed superseding CSDD to Headquarters Division of Design (DOD), Office of Complete Streets (CS) for review via email at [csdd@dot.ca.gov](mailto:csdd@dot.ca.gov). DOD Office of Complete Streets makes one of the following determinations:

1. DOD Office of Complete Streets concurs on the CSDD because the proposed complete streets elements are consistent with Caltrans guidance or the CSDD has sufficient justification for proposing complete streets elements that are not consistent with Caltrans guidance.
2. DOD Office of Complete Streets does not concur on the CSDD because the proposed complete streets elements are not consistent with Caltrans guidance and the CSDD does not have sufficient supporting justification. DOD Office of Complete Streets will provide comments or recommendations to the district. If the district agrees, the district revises the CSDD as needed, and DOD Office of Complete Streets provides concurrence. If the district does not agree with any provided comments or recommendations, the district should collaborate with DOD Office of Complete Streets to find a solution. This may require escalation through one or more of the following steps as needed:
  - Consultation with Headquarters and district subject matter experts as needed. Examples may include Asset Management for performance metrics, Financial Programming or Project Management for securing additional funding, the district design liaison or the Headquarters Division of Design district design liaison and project development coordinator meeting, known as Think Tank, for geometric-related matters.

- Headquarters Division of Design Deputy Division Chief review
- Headquarters Complete Streets steering committee review

When comments and recommendations from DOD Office of Complete Streets are resolved, the district revises the CSDD as needed, and DOD Office of Complete Streets provides concurrence.

### Certification and Concurrence

After review and resolution of any comments, and the DOD Office of Complete Streets indicates concurrence, circulate the CSDD for remaining certification and concurrence signatures. The certification signature is by the project engineer for the current phase of the project. Concurrence is given by:

- District complete streets coordinator, typically an individual employed in the district Division of Planning
- Chief, Office of Complete Streets, Headquarters Division of Design
- Deputy District Director for Planning
- Deputy District Director for Design or Region Division Chief of Project development
- District Director

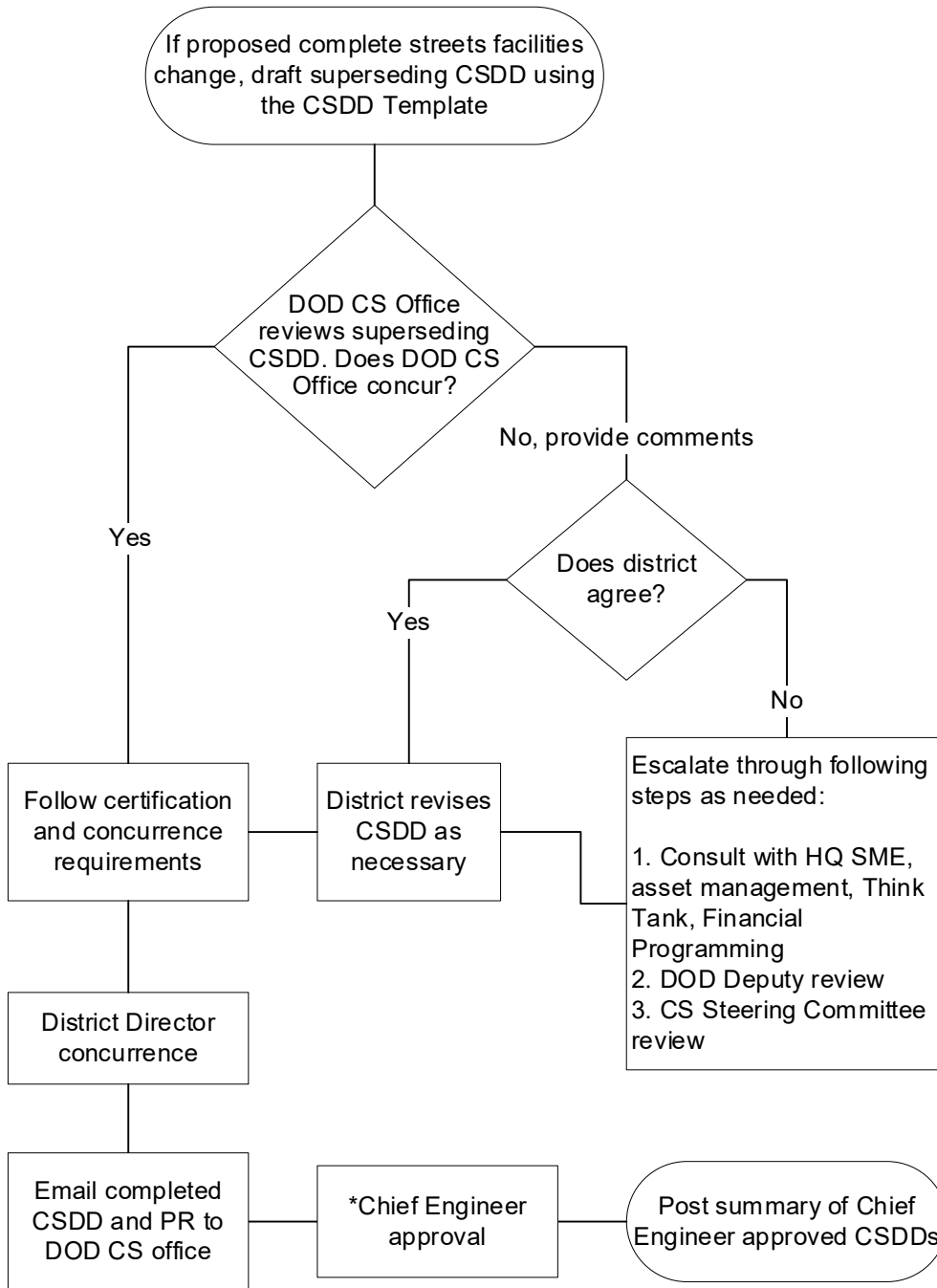
A superseding CSDD that includes complete streets consistent with Caltrans guidance is complete when the District Director provides concurrence.

After District Director concurrence, CSDDs for projects in the State Highway Operation and Protection Program with justification for not including complete streets facilities consistent with Caltrans guidance are combined and submitted to the Headquarters Deputy Director of Project Delivery (Chief Engineer). These CSDDs are complete upon approval by the Chief Engineer. DOD Office of Complete Streets will post Chief Engineer approval summaries on the Caltrans public internet website.

For PA&ED, the superseding CSDD should be completed before the start of PS&E. For PS&E, the superseding CSDD should be completed before the district ready-to-list date.

Figure FF-1 is a flowchart that summarizes the procedure for a superseding CSDD.

**Figure FF-1: Superseding CSDD Procedure Summary**



\*Chief Engineer approval applies only to SHOPP project CSDDs with justification for not including complete streets facilities consistent with Caltrans guidance. For PA&ED, superseding CSDD should be approved by the Chief Engineer before the start of PS&E phase. For PS&E, superseding CSDD should be approved by the Chief Engineer before the ready-to-list date.

## Project Records

A superseding CSDD that is prepared during the PA&ED phase will be attached to the project approval document. If a supplemental project approval document is prepared, the superseding CSDD will be attached to the supplemental project approval document. If a change to the complete streets facilities generates a superseding CSDD and a supplemental project approval document is not required, the superseding CSDD will be placed in the permanent project history file.

## **ARTICLE 4      Template**

This article is a template for the complete streets decision document. The template is editable to customize the responses to the questions. The template is available at:

[Appendix FF Template](#)